PEACE MAKER I

ピースメーカー

Nanae Chrono

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Peace Maker Volume 1
Created By Nanae Chrono

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Volume 1

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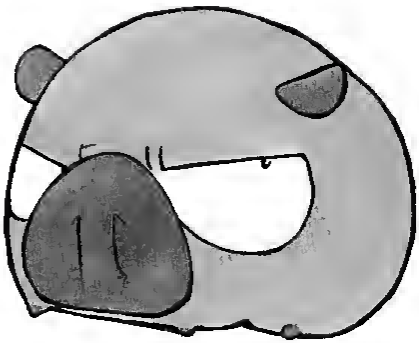
THOSE WERE THE CHAOTIC FINAL DAYS OF THE SHOGUNATE.
"DELIVER THIS TO HINO."
JAPAN HAD BEGUN TO CHART NEW WATERS.
"I'M COUNTING ON YOU..."
"... TETSUNOSUKE."

SOME CLUNG TO THEIR FAMILIAR WAYS.
huff
hff
"WHAT CAN YOU POSSIBLY GAIN BY STAYING HERE?"
hah
SOME SOUGHT CHANGE AS A REASON FOR LIVING.
hff
huff
"WHAT COULD POSSIBLY CHANGE IF YOU DIE HERE?"
SOME TRANSFORMED THEMSELVES, BECOMING "DEMONS."

"...WILL SURVIVE, AND THEN..."

EVERY-ONE WAS SWEPT ALONG BY THE TIDES OF THE ERA.

Act.1 I Will



FIRST YEAR OF GENJI (1864). MARCH.
HOLD ON, TETSU!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THAT THING?
OUTTA MY WAY, TATSU!

EXCUSE ME!!
Whew...
ビクッ
ビクッ

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? PUT THAT SIGN BACK WHERE YOU FOUND IT.
WHA...? YOU AGAIN?

D.
LET ME THROUGH THE DOOR!
IT SAYS RIGHT HERE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SQUAD MEMBERS!

THEY MUST BE "LOYAL AND PATRIOTIC." THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT AN AGE REQUIREMENT!
Oh?
BECAUSE IT'S OBVIOUS.
Bah!
WHO KNEW WE HAD TO MAKE A SPECIAL SIGN IN CASE A BRAT SHOWED UP?
AH HA HA...
YOU DO HAVE A POINT THERE!! WHAT A SILLY LITTLE FOOL...
THIS HAS GOT TO STOP.
COME ON NOW, TETSU. STOP PESTERING THE NICE MEN.
There, there
Ha ha ha!
YOU GOT IT!
WE'LL BE IN TROUBLE IF THIS GOES ANY FURTHER.
COME BACK WHEN YOU'VE GROWN ANOTHER FOOT OR SO.
ALL RIGHT? PIPSQUEAK.

.....
BMP
ドクン
ドクン
I'M BEGGING YOU, TETSU...
ドクン
BMP
BMP
...JUST THIS ONCE...
...SHOW A LITTLE RESTRAINT...

WHO THE HELL...
...ARE YOU CALLING A PIPSQUEAK?!
YOU'VE CROSSED THE LINE!
AND NOW YOU'RE GONNA PAY!

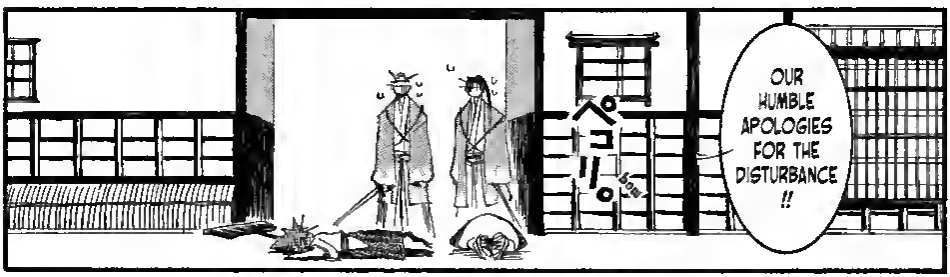
I MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M 15 YEARS OLD!
I'M NOT A *BRAT* I'M NOT A PUPPY, AND I'M NOT A *PIPSQUEAK.* I'M A *MAN!*
ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE

HEH HEH HEH.
HEH.
I'M GONNA GET YOU FOR THAT, PIPSQUEAK!
YOU INSULTED THE ENTIRE BRIGADE!!
PIPSQUEAK AGAIN?! I'LL SHOW YOU!
I CAN TAKE WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT! BRING IT, BITCHES!
IDIOT!
!!
CAPTAIN! THE TENTH SQUAD HAS ASSEMBLED!
YOU'RE GONNA TASTE THE MIGHT OF MY FIST!
WHAT ?!

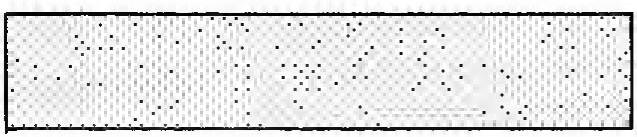
LOCATION?
KIYAMACHI STREET, BY THE THIRD DISTRICT BRIDGE. REPORTS SHOW FIVE OR SIX MEN INVOLVED.
ALL RIGHT!
!!
DON'T LET THE SECOND SQUAD BEAT US THERE!
COME WHAT MAY, THIS ONE'S OURS!
?!
TENTH SQUAD!

MOVE OUT!
Gack!
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP

ズ〃ズ〃…
……


ペコリ。
OUR HUMBLE APOLOGIES FOR THE DISTURBANCE !!

ズ〃ズ〃…
GOOD DAY!



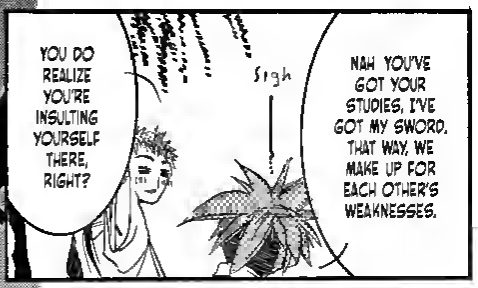
HONESTLY.
WHO'S STUPID ENOUGH TO PICK A FIGHT WITH THE SHINSENGUMI?
Sigh...
IF THOSE GIANT JERKS HADN'T SHOWED UP, I'D TOTALLY HAVE--
STOP IT, TETSU.
HMPH
EAT IT, TATSU.

ICHIMURA TATSUNOSUKE
THEY DID YOU A FAVOR BY KNOCKING YOU OVER.
Don't you get it?
Good grief..
YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE WHILE YOU'RE STILL A LITTLE BRAT, DO YOU?
WHAT?!
STOP IT! HOW AM I A LITTLE BRAT?!
BY PULLING WHAT YOU JUST PULLED.
HEY IT'S NOTHING TO BE DOWN ABOUT, OKAY? JUST LEARN YOUR LESSON
.....
WHAT DO YOU CARE? YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN ACCEPTED.
Tch!

STARTING TOMORROW, YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE SHINSENGUMI
HA HA. WELL. IT DOESN'T SOUND SO BAD WHEN YOU SAY IT LIKE THAT

I MAY BE IN THE SHINSENGUMI, BUT MY ONLY WEAPON WILL BE AN ABACUS.
MAYBE THAT'S THE WAY FORWARD, TETSU. STUDY UP AND BECOME A BOOKKEEPER, TOO.
.....

EVER SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF THE BLACK SHIPS, THE MASTERLESS WARRIORS OF THE JOUI FACTION HAVE BEEN THIRSTY FOR FOREIGN BLOOD...
THE SHINSENGUMI ARE THE GUARDIANS OF KYOTO, AND THEIR JOB'S ONLY GOING TO GET MORE DIFFICULT.


YOU DO REALIZE YOU'RE INSULTING YOURSELF THERE, RIGHT?
Sigh
NAH. YOU'VE GOT YOUR STUDIES, I'VE GOT MY SWORD. THAT WAY, WE MAKE UP FOR EACH OTHER'S WEAKNESSES.

...THE SHINSENGUMI DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE BABYSITTERS.
WELL, AT ANY RATE...

Right? Right?
TH-THAT'S WHY, UM, I'M GOING TO BE A WHATEVER-YOU-CALL-IT OF KYOTO AND KILL FOREIGNERS!
SORRY FOR USING ALL THOSE BIG WORDS.
I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE SHINSENGUMI, TATSU.
WHAT-EVER.
YOU WON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS...
...BUT AS YOUR BIG BROTHER, I'M RELIEVED THEY KICKED YOU OUT.
YOU'D JUST WIND UP GETTING SKEWERED.
HEY!
JUST...
...LOOK WHO'S TALKING!
YOU'RE JUST A BOOKKEEPER WHO WON'T FIGHT! A COWARD!!
YOU LOST SIGHT OF THE GOAL! YOU GOT SCARED!

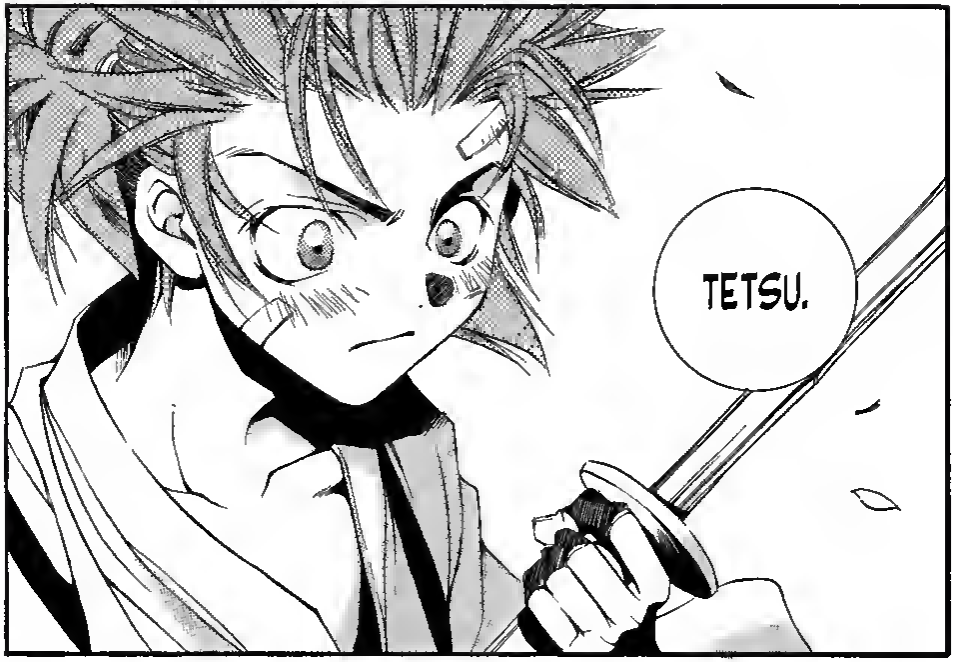
TATSU...
MY GOAL...
...IS TO WORK HARD AND EARN MONEY. THAT'S ALL.
IF THIS WEREN'T THE BEST PLACE TO DO THAT...
...I'D NEVER JOIN THOSE MURDERERS.
TETSU, YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE SHINSENGUMI REALLY *ARE*, DON'T YOU?
TATSU?

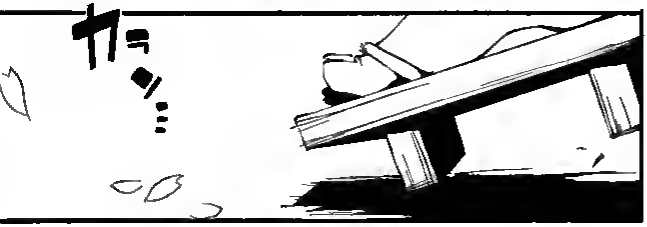
THEY DON'T HESITATE TO CUT DOWN ANYONE WHO LOOKS LIKE A RONIN. TO THE PEOPLE OF KYOTO, THEY'RE NOTHING BUT A MENACE.
SAYING THEY'RE THE "GUARDIANS OF KYOTO" SOUNDS NICE, BUT IN THE END, THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF GOVERNMENT-SANCTIONED ASSASSINS.
...FOR YOU TO BECOME A PART OF THAT.
THERE'S NO REASON..
DAD WOULD NEVER HAVE ALLOWED IT.

AI HOUP ZAT...
...YUU... UMM...
THERE YOU GO WITH THOSE STRANGE WORDS AGAIN.
THAT'S THE FOREIGNER'S LANGUAGE, ISN'T IT?
WON'T PEOPLE GET MAD IF YOU SPEAK IT TOO MUCH?
Sigh...
HOW SMALL OF YOU, TETSUNO-SUKE.
HUHA?

JAPAN IS GOING TO UNDERGO A RADICAL CHANGE. I FIGURE IT'LL BE PRETTY CHAOTIC FOR A WHILE.
THAT IS WHY, TETSUNOSUKE...
LISTEN UP, MY BOY.
Hee hee...
I DIDN'T RAISE YOU TO BE A SMALL MAN WITH A NARROW MIND!
HEY! I'M NOT SMALL!
...YOU MUST BECOME A PEACEMAKER.
YOU'RE ACTUALLY A BIG MAN.
PEA... WHAT?

"I'M SURE YOU CAN BECOME ONE."
BUT...
...THAT WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
THE ONLY WAY I'M GONNA GROW UP BIG...
ギュ
...AND GET STRONG.
...IS TO JOIN THE SHINSENGUMI...
I HAVE TO.


TETSU.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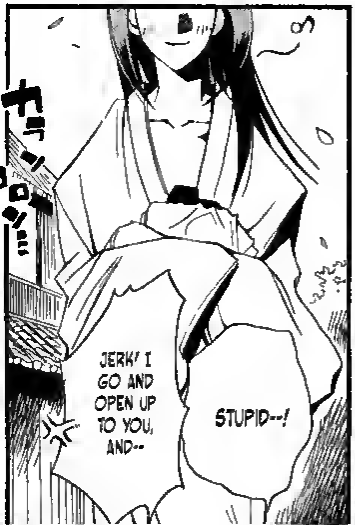

ガン
ゴロン…
JERK! I GO AND OPEN UP TO YOU, AND--
STUPID--!

HEY!
PFFT

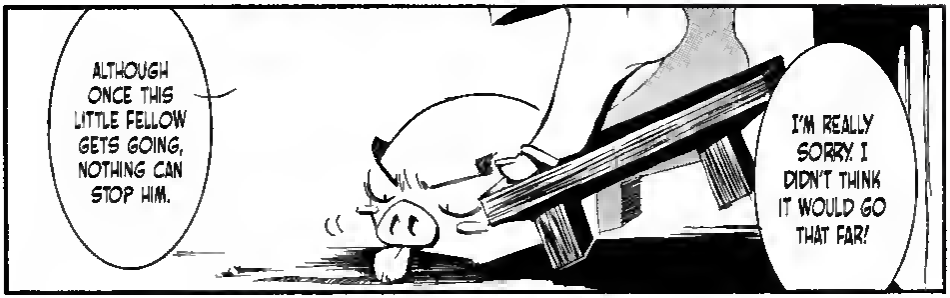
……

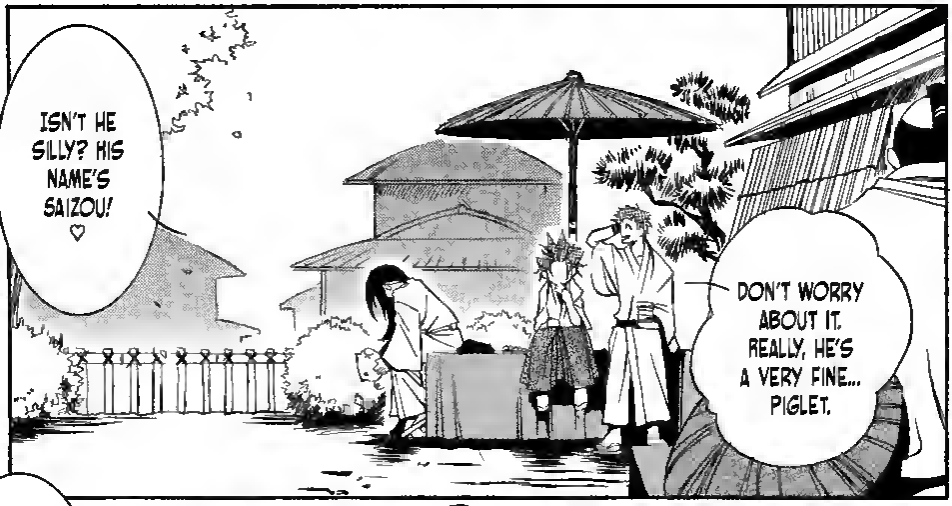
SAIZOU!
?
THEN HERE GOES!
Heh heh
OH, YOU WANT THIS?
pamm!!
Ah ha ha!
HM? WHAT'S WRONG, SAIZOU?
FETCH!
ギュルルルルル
GYAAH!!

Goshness! I'm so sorry!
UH. I GUESS SOMEONE'S PLAYING FETCH WITH A--
.....
...WHAT WAS THAT?
AHHHHHHH
--DOG?
STOP IT, SAIZOU!
WHY CAN'T THIS DAY JUST END ALREADY?
HOW 'BOUT I EAT IT?!

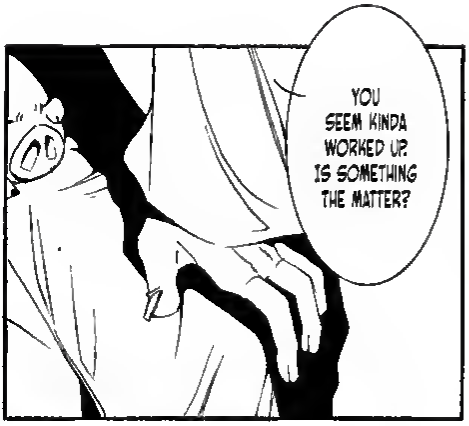
OOOOINK!!
Pig
ACK! OOPS.
.....
EXCUSE ME!

NEED A HAND DOWN THERE?
oink oink oink


ALTHOUGH ONCE THIS LITTLE FELLOW GETS GOING, NOTHING CAN STOP HIM.
I'M REALLY SORRY. I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD GO THAT FAR!

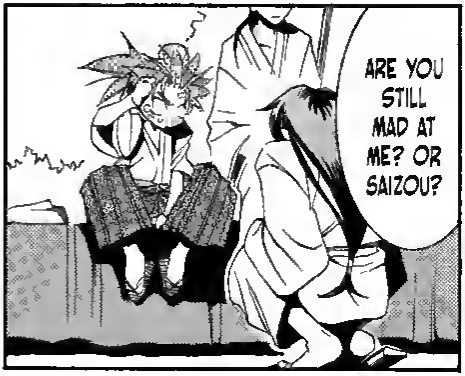

ISN'T HE SILLY? HIS NAME'S SAIZOU! ♡
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. REALLY, HE'S A VERY FINE... PIGLET.

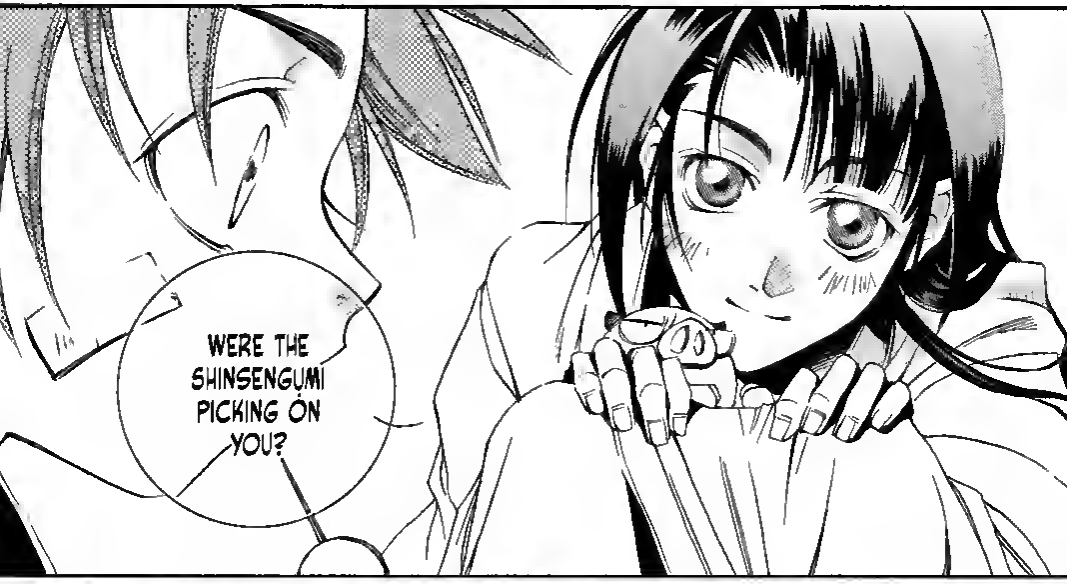
HEY, LADY! I'LL HAVE ANOTHER RED BEAN BUN!
Right?
RIGHT, TETSU?
OH NO, WE'VE ALREADY HAD PLENTY!
WITH MY APOLOGIES. GO AHEAD, MY TREAT.


YOU SEEM KINDA WORKED UP. IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

Sorry. Ignore him.
.....

NAH. I'M OVER THAT.


ARE YOU STILL MAD AT ME? OR SAIZOU?


WERE THE SHINSENGUMI PICKING ON YOU?

I'M GOIN' HOME TO SLEEP!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TETSU?
!
THEY'D NEVER ACCEPT A KID WHO'S SO EASY TO READ.
YOU WERE TOTALLY RIGHT, BIG BRO.
WELL, THEN!
YOU WANT TO *JOIN* THE SHINSENGUMI!?
HUH?

IF THAT'S ALL IT IS, I'LL ASK THEM TO CONSIDER YOU.

I DO HAVE FRIENDS IN THE SHINSENGUMI, AFTER ALL.
Okay?

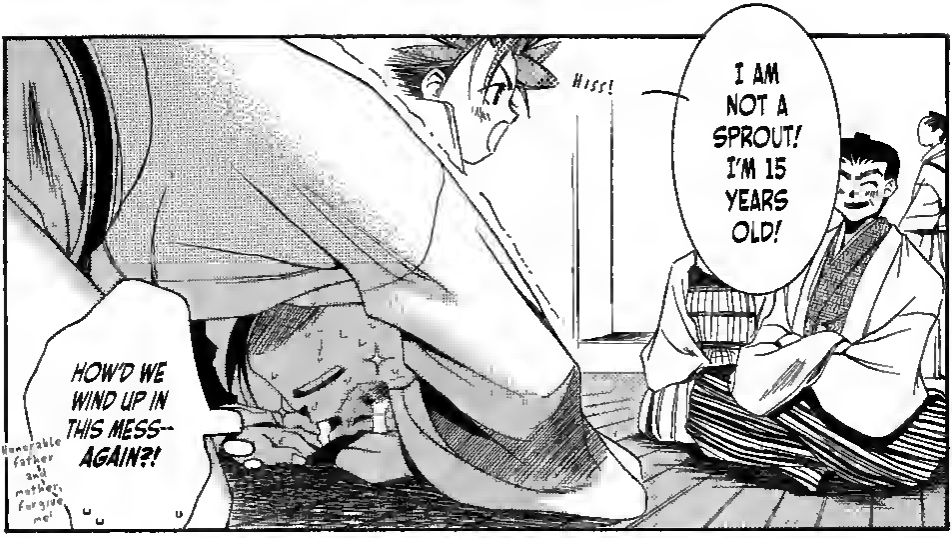
REALLY?
IT'S STRANGE THAT THEY WOULDN'T LET YOU JOIN BECAUSE YOU'RE YOUNG.
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
THERE'S AT LEAST ONE MEMBER WHO WAS LICENSED AS A FULL MASTER IN HIS TEENS AND WAS MADE THE HEAD INSTRUCTOR OF HIS SCHOOL IN HIS TWENTIES.

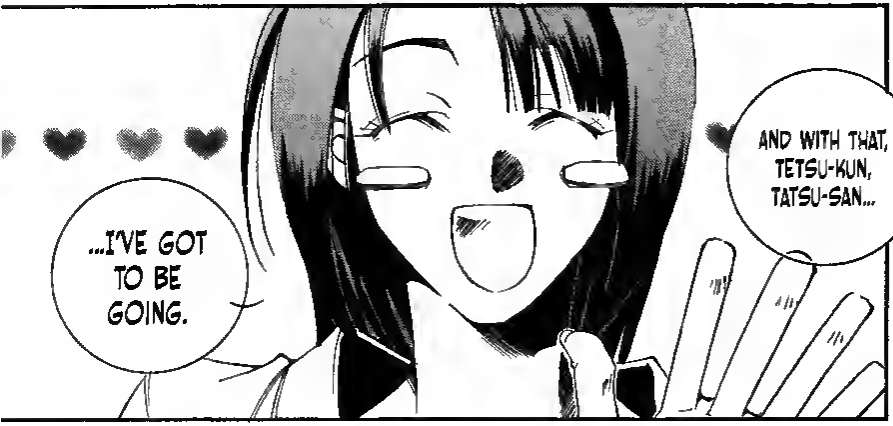
...OKITA SOUJI, RIGHT?!
OH MY, BUT YOU DO KNOW YOUR STUFF.
Augh... I don't like where this is heading...
I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN HIM, BUT I'VE HEARD HE'S A GENIUS SWORDSMAN!
REALLY.
IF YOU GOT TO FIGHT HIM, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?!
I'D USE MY MIGHT AND SKILL TO BEAT HIM...
...TO A POP!
AH HA HA HA HA! ♡
THAT'S PULP, YOU IDIOT.

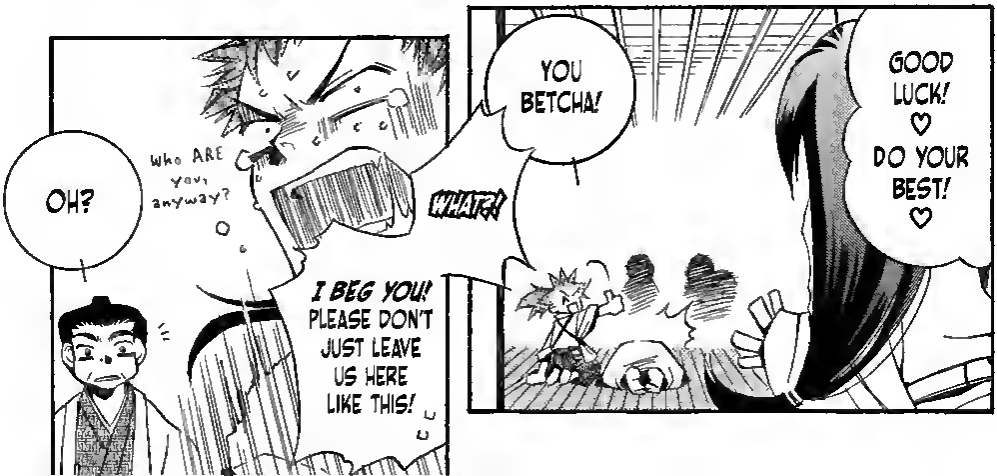
YAAAH!!
YAARG!!
HAAAA!!
THAT'S ENOUGH!!
POINT!
EXCUSE ME! DO YOU KNOW WHERE KONDOU-SAN IS?
OH, THE COMMANDER IS OVER THERE.
IT'S THE REAL THING! A REAL TRAINING SESSION WITH REAL WARRIORS IN A REAL DOJO!
AH!

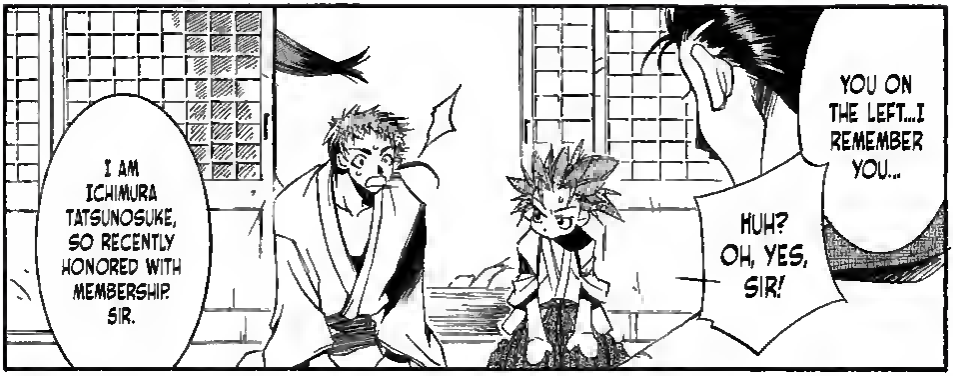
HE IS FRIENDS WITH THE COMMANDER?
WHAT KIND OF GUY IS HE?!
OH, THERE HE IS!
KONDOU-SAN! ♡
THE COMMANDER?
THE...
NO, REALLY... WHAT IS HE?
And here I was thinking about going out with you tonight, too!
Wah ha ha ha...
Oh! We'd just end up at your mistress' house!
HA HA HA! ARE YOU ALREADY DRUNK? IT'S BARELY NOON!
YOU'RE TRAINING AGAIN TODAY? YOU HAVEN'T PLAYED WITH ME AT ALL LATELY. I'M BORED! ♡
抱 hug
きっと

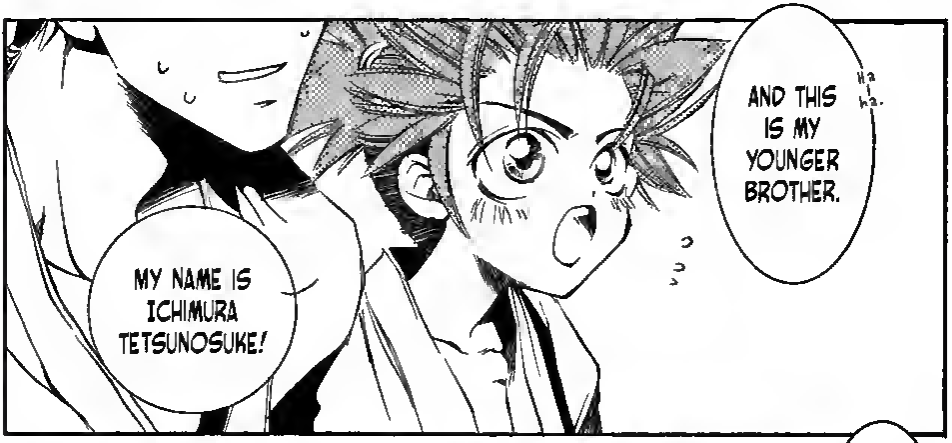
WELL, WELL...
SO YOU WANT TO FIGHT SOUJI, EH?
QUITE THE BRAVE LITTLE SPROUT, AREN'T CHA?!
KONDOU ISAMI


I AM NOT A SPROUT! I'M 15 YEARS OLD!
Hiss!
HOW'D WE WIND UP IN THIS MESS-- AGAIN?!
Honorable father and mother, forgive me!


AND WITH THAT, TETSU-KUN, TATSU-SAN...
...I'VE GOT TO BE GOING.


GOOD LUCK! ♡ DO YOUR BEST! ♡
YOU BETCHA!
WHAT?!
OH?
Who ARE you, anyway?
I BEG YOU! PLEASE DON'T JUST LEAVE US HERE LIKE THIS!


I AM ICHIMURA TATSUNOSUKE, SO RECENTLY HONORED WITH MEMBERSHIP. SIR.
HUH? OH, YES, SIR!
YOU ON THE LEFT...I REMEMBER YOU..


MY NAME IS ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE!
AND THIS IS MY YOUNGER BROTHER.
Ha ha.

BUT IF YOU BEAT SOUJI, I'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MAKE YOU CAPTAIN OF THE FIRST SQUAD.
THIS WAS AT *HIS* REQUEST.
HMM...
WELL.

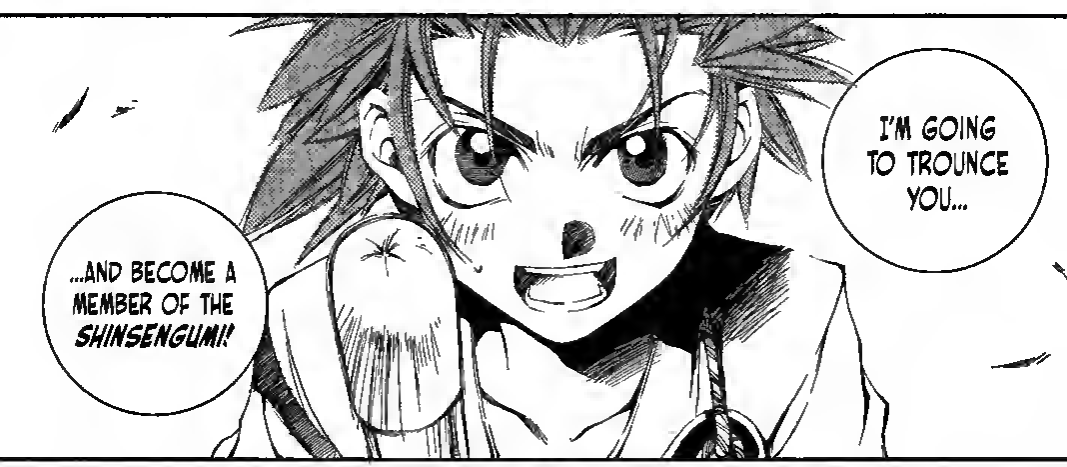
THANK YOU VERY MUCH! SIR!
HA HA HA!
LET'S DO THIS! SOMEBODY LEND THE BOY SOME PRACTICE ARMOR!
SOUJI.
YOU'RE READY, TOO, RIGHT?
ス…

NICE TO MEET YOU, TETSU-KUN.
MY APOLOGIES FOR MAKING YOU WAIT.
OKITA SOUJI

?
UM...
WE'VE GOT TO BEG FORGIVENESS AND... HEY!
THIS IS *BAD*, TETSU! WE SAID ALL THAT STUFF TO HIM WITHOUT KNOWING WHO HE WAS!
HE'LL GET HIS REVENGE BY SLICING US TO RIBBONS!
Ah ha ha!
WHAAAT?!
SURPRISED YOU, DIDN'T I?

WELL, WELL...
HEH HEH. FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS...
...YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN WHAT YOU SAID.
YOU'RE GOING TO "BEAT ME TO A POP," I TAKE IT?

.....
OF COURSE!


I'M GOING TO TROUNCE YOU...
...AND BECOME A MEMBER OF THE *SHINSENGUMI!*

?!
WHACK
Yaah!
Whoa!
.....
WHAT A RACKET...
YAMAZAKI-KUN. WHAT IS GOING ON OVER THERE?
SIR.

IT SEEMS A YOUNG MAN NAMED ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE APPEARED AND REQUESTED A MATCH WITH OKITA-SENSEI.
ICHIMURA...?
WHO GAVE PERMISSION?
COMMANDER KONDOU, SIR.
.....
PLEASE.
HE KNOWS FULL WELL THAT SOUJI IS INCAPABLE OF RESTRAINING HIMSELF.
WHACK

OH MY. YOU'RE KIDDING, AREN'T YOU?
I'M BEGGING YOU! PLEASE STOP THEM!
Oh no no no no no...
WELL, YOU KNOW...
DAMN IT! I'M JUST GETTING WARMED UP!!

Bam
Ow!
Doh.
GOOD WORK, GENTS!
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?
COMMANDER! THE SECOND SQUAD HAS RETURNED!
THE BOY'S GOT A LOT OF SPUNK. HE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE A PERFECT SQUAD MEMBER.
BOTH THE BOY AND SOUJI INSISTED, SO I GAVE IT A SHOT.
Ah ha ha!
DON'T WORRY. HIS OPPONENT'S JUST A KID!
I saw these men this morning..
Uwah! wa!
THAT KID'S GONNA GET CREAMED!
Ow!
WANT ME TO CALL A DOCTOR?
Ah ha ha!
HE'S BEEN UNUSUALLY GOOD ABOUT HOLDING HIMSELF BACK.

YAAAAH!!
WHOOPS!
ひょいっ
バーン
. MAYBE THAT'S WHY YOU FIGHT AS SUBTLE AS A CANNON-BALL.
Ah ha ha!
SHUT UP!
BUT HE'S RIGHT. I WON'T GET ANYWHERE JUST ATTACKING HIM HEAD ON.
I NEED TACTICS, STRATEGY, OR IT'S ALL OVER.
Aaugh!
YOU ALWAYS STRIKE IN A STRAIGHT LINE, DON'T YOU? WELL, TETSU MEANS "IRON," SO...

...BY SOME JERK WHO'S MAKING FUN OF ME.
No thanks! I don't need it.
Okita-sensei, please put on your armor.
I'M NOT GONNA BE BEATEN...
ALL RIGHT...
TATSU!
GIMME A SHINAI!
HUNH?
GIMME ANOTHER ONE!
WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT THING IN YOUR HAND?

AW-RIGHT!!
TWO-SWORD STYLE?!

JIKISHIN NITOU RYUU!! TWO-SWORD STYLE SECRET ULTIMATE TECHNIQUE!
I THINK I MIGHT HAVE HEARD OF IT BEFORE...
JIKISHIN NITOU RYUU? WHAT KIND OF STYLE IS THAT?
LET'S SEE...
HOW IS HE GOING TO ATTACK...?
Heh heh!
HE REALLY IS A FUNNY KID.
SHADOW SWIRL! KAGEMA-WASHI!

YOUR LITTLE BROTHER USES A TWO-SWORD STYLE?!
Whoooa...
NO...
HA... HA HA...
YEAH, RIGHT.
HE STARTS OUT WITH A STANDARD MOVE—AIMING FOR MY HEAD FROM THE RIGHT. SHOMEN.
HAAAAAA!!
WHICH MEANS NEXT, HE'LL AIM FOR MY TRUNK FROM THE LEFT. DOU.

EH?
WHA?!
WH-WHY'D YOU AIM AT MY CROTCH?!
!!

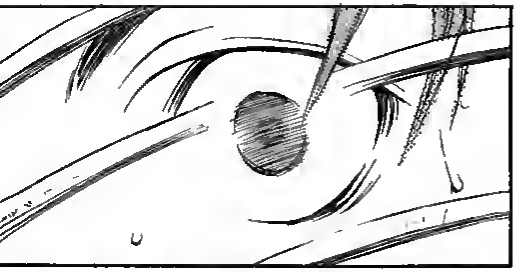
HE SLID UNDER HIM?!
HUH?

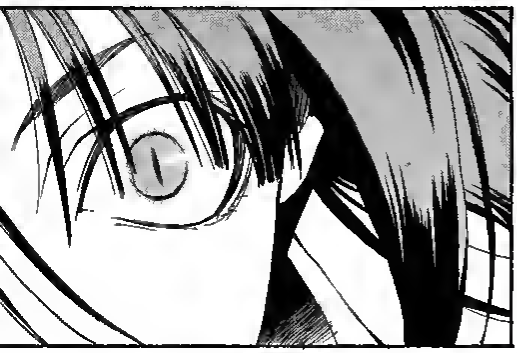
BAM
.....

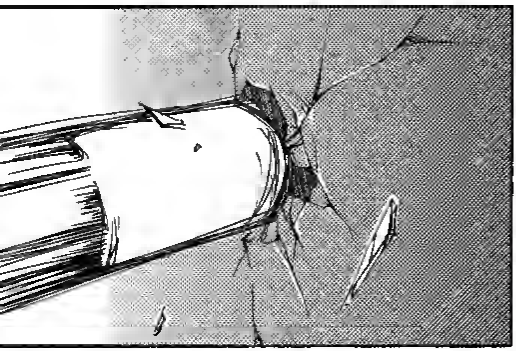
ざっ
ざっ
ざっ…
D-DID HE HIT?
WHAT A KID. I CAN'T BELIEVE HE DOVE BETWEEN HIS LEGS.
WELL, OKITA-SENSEI CAN HANDLE *THAT*
BUT STILL...
THAT WAS CLOSE.
WHAT KIND OF SWORDSMAN-SHIP IS THAT?!
OH, SHUT UP! IT'S ALL RIGHT AS LONG AS I WIN!

THESE MATCHES ARE BEST OUT OF THREE, RIGHT?
DON'T HOLD BACK THIS TIME!
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME!
LET'S GO!
WHOA, YOU WANT SOME MORE, KID?
HE CHANGED HIS STANCE? I RECOGNIZE IT...

YAAAA!!
HE'S DRAWN HIS LEFT SHOULDER BACK AND... PUT HIS RIGHT FOOT FORWARD...
AND THE TIP OF HIS SWORD IS POINTING TO THE RIGHT... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. THAT'S...
...TENNEN RISHIN RYUU-- HIRASEIGAN STANCE!
STOP, TE--







TE...
!!!

TETSU!!
TETSU!!

WHOA!!
ドオ

!!
BDMP
トクン…
THOSE EYES...
ナタル
いや…
いやだ…
THEY WERE THE SAME...
BDMP
トクン
BDMP
トクン
...AM I GOING TO...
BDMP
トクン
THOSE EYES...
BDMP
トクン

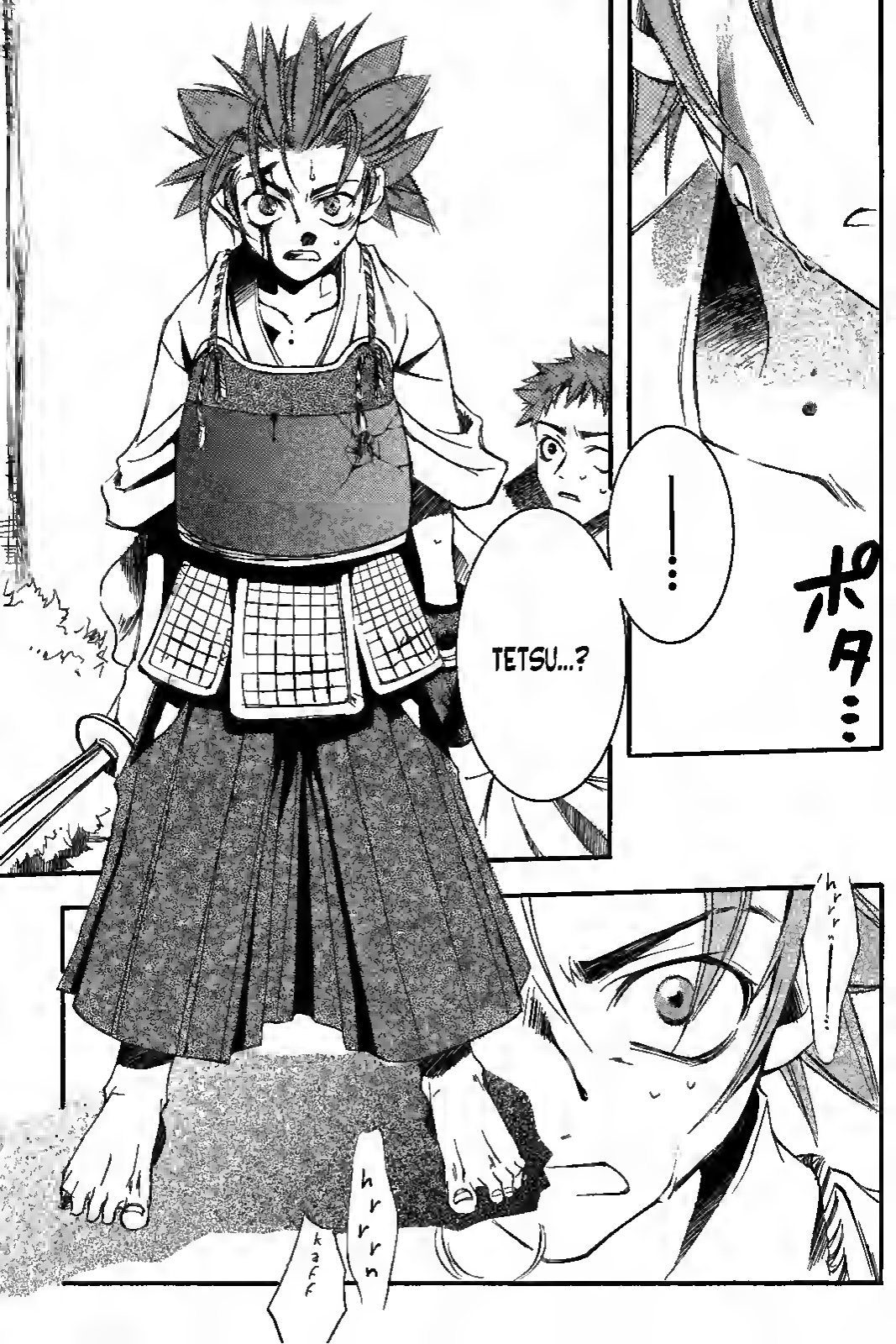
...LOSE TO THEM AGAIN?
BDMP
Y-YOU BASTARD.
DAMN IT.

パキ…パキ…
ARE YOU..
...ONE OF THOSE CHOUSHUU GUYS?
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
NO WAY I'LL HAND IT OVER TO YOU BASTARDS!
THERE'S NO WAY!
YOU BASTARDS ...
YAAAAAH!!

SPLAT

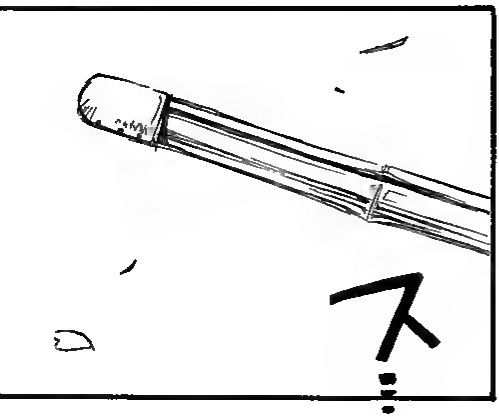
BAMP
BAMP
BAMP
BAMP

.....
AWW, DAMN IT!
SNAP OUT OF IT, TETSU! HEY!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S OVER.
NO.
IT'S NOT OVER YET.


ポタ…
!!!
TETSU...?
hrrr…!
hrrrn
kaff

SOUJI?!

Tch.



SHINK
TE...

AH...
THAT'S...

VICE COMMANDER OF
THE SHINSENGUMI--
HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU

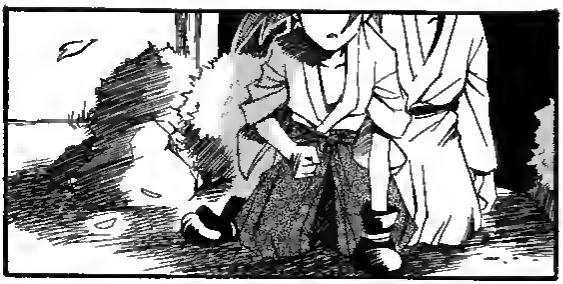
.....
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, CHILD?

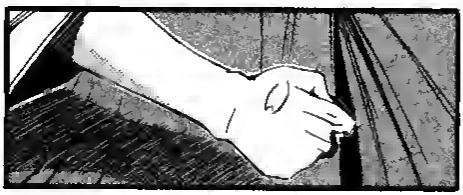
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU DONE THIS?
SOUJI.
!
WHOA! TETSU!!
I-I'M SORRY, HIJIKATA-SAN!
GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OOH...

くー-ゎっ
THAT WAS SPLENDID, TETSUNOSUKE-KUN!!
SPLENDID ...
ぐぬぬ
十
WAY OF THE WARRIOR
道
YOU KEPT FIGHTING UNTIL THE VERY END, NEVER TURNING YOUR BACK ON YOUR ENEMY! YOU MAY BE YOUNG, BUT YOU'RE A FINE WARRIOR!
THIS IS WHAT A MAN SHOULD BE!
A speech from a classic text
THE SHINSEN-GUMI NEEDS A MAN LIKE YOU!
SO DOES THAT MEAN..
ぱぁっ
...I'M IN?

WH-
WHY NOT, TOSHI?!
HE'S NOT JUST WEAK--HE'S A KID. HE'S BENEATH NOTICE.
I-I'LL GET STRONG!
I'LL TRAIN, AND I'LL FIGHT!
WE CAN'T DO THAT.

I'LL BECOME A SQUAD MEMBER AND GET EVEN STRONGER..!
AS I WAS SAYING.
IN THE SHINSENGUMI...
...WE WILL NOT TEACH YOU THE SWORD SO YOU CAN GET REVENGE.





C
Congratulations on becoming a member! Drink up! Drink up!!
カラッ
Ah ha ha..
YOU DON'T LIKE SAKE?

.....
I'm sorry about what happened earlier.
You know?
I never understood what was so great about it.
I don't like it, either.
No one ever trains with me because of it. It even makes Hijikata-san worry all the time...
I can't control my strength a lot of the time. Before I even realize it, I see someone only as an enemy.
You were serious, right?
...I'm a dangerous person.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
ACTUALLY...
...IT MAKES ME HAPPY.
TETSU-KUN.. MAY I... ASK YOU SOMETHING?
WHAT?
THAT'S GOOD.
YOU WANT REVENGE...
...WHAT FOR?

I WONDER...
...HOW HE KNEW.
MAYBE I REALLY AM TOO EASY TO READ.
THAT VICE COMMANDER.
.....
THEY LOOKED VERY DESPERATE. THAT'S WHY.
YOUR EYES.

IT WAS TWO YEARS AGO.
MY FATHER AND MOTHER...
...WERE KILLED RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.
TATSU WASN'T HOME.
I HID IN THE CLOSET, SO I SURVIVED, BUT...
...I COULDN'T DO...
...ANYTHING... TO STOP IT.

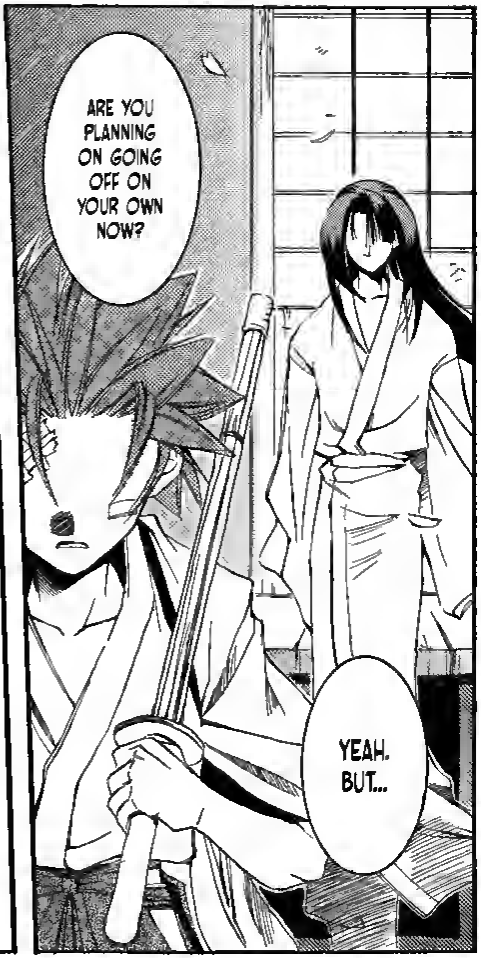
EARLIER...
...YOUR EYES LOOKED LIKE THAT MAN'S EYES. THE KILLER.
AM I GOING TO BE HELPLESS AGAIN?
AM I GOING TO LOSE TO THOSE EYES AGAIN?

IT KEEPS ME UP AT NIGHT.
WHY AM I SO WEAK?
...I GET SO FRUSTRATED...
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT...

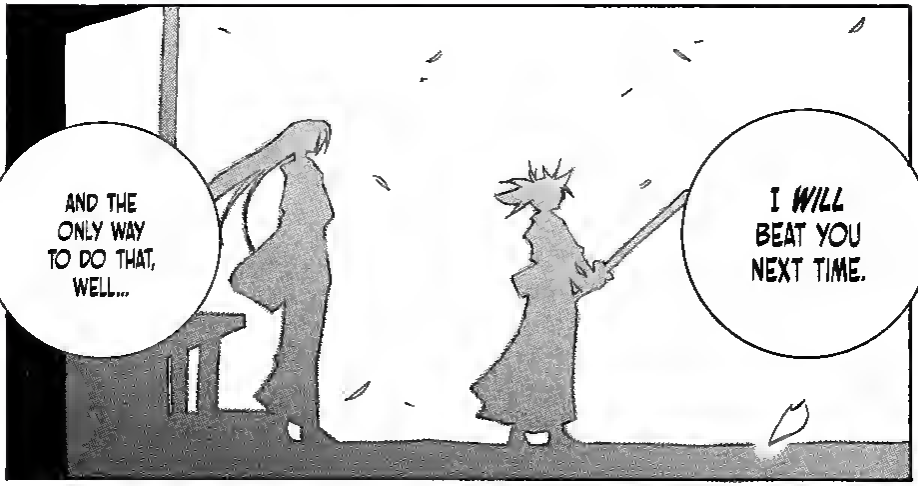
!
TETSU-KUN.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
.....
PLEASE DON'T TELL TATSU.

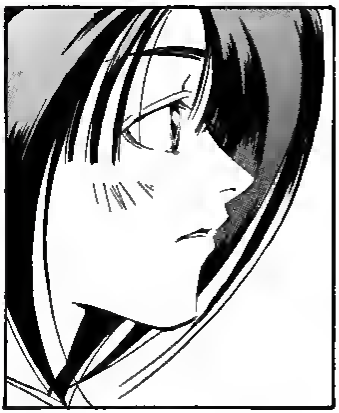
EVER SINCE MOM AND DAD WERE KILLED, TATSU'S BROKEN HIS BACK-- AND HE'S NO GOOD AT PHYSICAL LABOR-- JUST TO PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE FOR ME.
Oh, come on!
BUT HE'S HAPPY NOW THAT HE'S JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI. HE CAN MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO EAT AND LIVE BY WORKING WITH THE ABACUS.
AND HE'LL BE AWAY FROM THE DANGER ON THE STREETS.

...I WILL DEFINITELY COME BACK HERE.


ARE YOU PLANNING ON GOING OFF ON YOUR OWN NOW?
YEAH. BUT...

スッ
I'LL GET STRONGER.





THIS BOY...
HE'S JUST LIKE ME.

YOU SAID YOU WANTED REVENGE, RIGHT?

IF THAT'S TRULY WHAT YOU WANT...
...ARE YOU WILLING TO THROW AWAY YOUR HUMANITY?
CAN YOU BE UNAFRAID OF DEMONS?
I'LL PROVE TO YOU...

...THAT I'LL BEAT EVEN DEMONS.
VERY WELL.

IN THAT CASE...
...I'LL TEACH YOU SOMETHING USEFUL.

Act.2
Things We Said Today

"...HIDE IN THE ALLEY BY THE WACHIGAI-YA IN SHIMABARA."
"IN THE HOUR OF THE DOG..."
* Hour of the Dog roughly between 7:00-9:00pm
Wachigai-ya A red light district in Shimabara, Kyoto.
"YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHAT HIJIKATA SAID."
YEAH, BUT...

THIS ISN'T NEAR THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT!
AREN'T THE SAKURA SO BEAUTIFUL AT NIGHT?
I SO WANTED TO SHOW THEM TO YOU.
YEAH, THEY ARE.
BUT I THINK THE SAKURA AT THE QUARTERS ARE MORE BEAUTIFUL.
I RECOGNIZE THAT VOICE!
MY, WHAT A HEARTLESS PERSON YOU ARE.
BUT...

* Quarters. Where Shinsengumi members lodge

THAT'S WHAT I LIKE BEST ABOUT YOU.
VICE COMMANDER HIJIKATA
...!
I THOUGHT HE WAS REALLY STRAIGHT-LACED... EVEN PRUDISH...

HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU, RIGHT?
.....
AND WHAT IF I AM?
YOU DAMN SHOGUNATE DOG!
HIJIKATA-SA--
DIVINE PUNISH-MENT!

GAAAUGH!!!
ドン

GRAARGH!!!
BAS-TARD!

ドクン…
BDMP
AUGH…
ドクン…
BDMP
AAAUGH…
ドクン

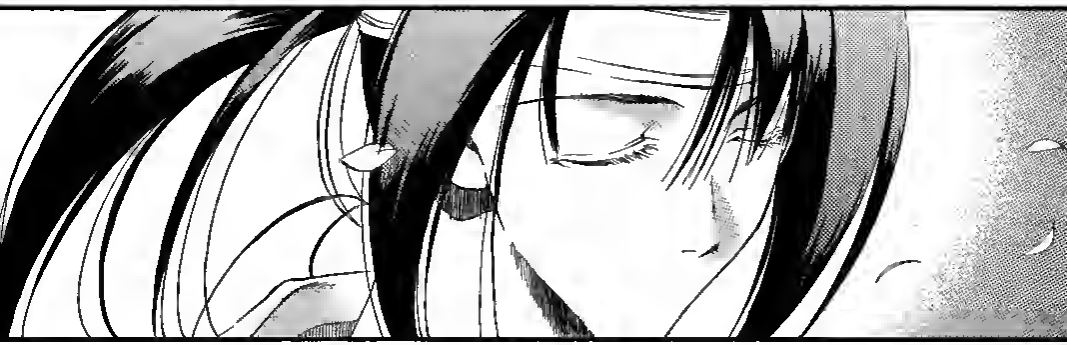
YOU'VE A TALENT FOR ACTING. BUT NO CRAFT.
PLEASE...
FORGIVE M--
EEE--
URGH!
DAMN IT! YOU BASTARD!
HOW DARE YOU KILL MITSUO!

AAUGH!!
Waugh!
AAAAUGH!!!
ドパァ
ドパッ
TETSU-KUN!!
O-OKITA?
ARE YOU HURT?
——!!

SHINSEN-GUMI?!
YOU DIDN'T REALLY NEED US AFTER ALL.
THEY WERE USING A WOMAN FROM CHOUSHUU TO GET CLOSE TO HIJIKATA-SAN.
WE KNEW EVERY-THING.
WHY...?

CHILD.
LET ME EXPLAIN IT SO YOU UNDERSTAND.

EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THE SHINSENGUMI...
...IS A DEMON.



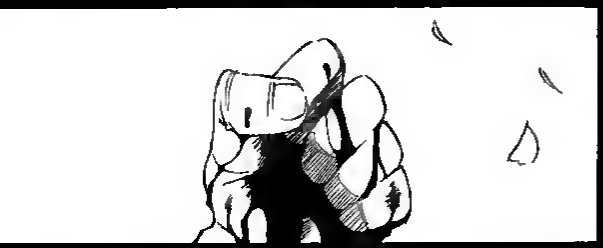
"CAN YOU BE UNAFRAID OF DEMONS?"

I FEEL
SICK.

"YOU'RE ACTUALLY..."

"...A BIG MAN."

"I'M SURE."



WHAT A SHAME...
IT'S BEEN RAINING SINCE MORNING.
HIJIKATA-SAN, IF YOU DON'T GET UP SOON, MUSHROOMS ARE GOING TO GROW ON YOUR HEAD.
.....

...THE PUPPY FOUND SHELTER FROM THE RAIN?
I WONDER IF...
WHO CARES?
パチャーン
バサッ
SIGH...

AH?

TETSU?
!!!

I'M NOT AFRAID OF ANY DEMONS.

PLEASE...
...TURN ME INTO A DEMON.

すっ
YOU MAY BE LITTLE...
...BUT YOUR EYES CAN'T LIE, AND THEY SHOW YOU HAVE THE COURAGE OF A MAN.
YOU'RE MUCH LIKE SOUJI.

ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE.
IN DEFERENCE TO SOUJI, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO JOIN.
HIJIKATA-SAN! ♡
IS THAT TRUE, TOSHI?
ペッ

Hey...
Eh heh heh heh...
I did it... Mom, Dad...
にゃお
Tatsu...
Ah ha ha ha!
HE'S LIKE ME?
I THINK HE'S MORE LIKE SOMEONE ELSE.

.....?
OH, LOOK.
THE RAIN HAS STOPPED.

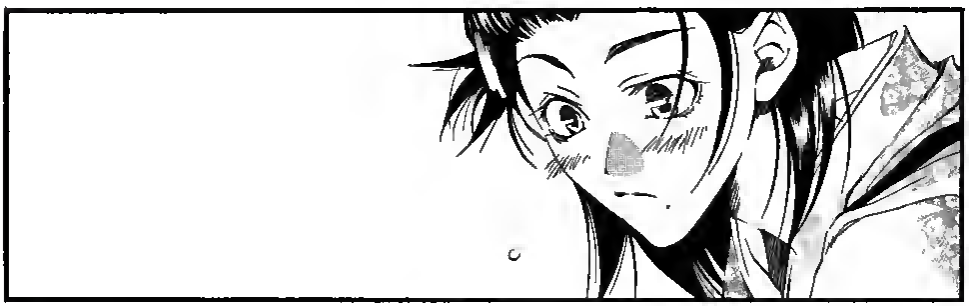
Act.3 This Boy

HEY, HEY!
DID YOU...
...HEAR ABOUT THAT KID?
YOU MEAN ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THIS MORNING?
I WONDER WHICH SQUAD THE VICE COMMANDER'S GOING TO PUT HIM IN?
WELL, EVIDENTLY...

カッカッ!!
カチャカチャ
……
AAAAH!!
THAT WAS GREAT!
LISTEN, TETSU.
DON'T DRINK SOUP LIKE IT'S SAKE.
AH HA HA! OH, WHO CARES?
That's something old men do.

SURE, I LOOK PEACEFUL. PLACID.
BUT BIG BROTHER'S GOT A LOT OF THINGS HE WANTS TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT. A *LOT* OF THINGS.
サッ
I'LL HAVE A FIFTH BOWL, PLEASE!
……
THAT'S ONE HUNGRY KID.
BUT IF THE OTHERS CAN'T GET SECONDS AT DINNER TIME, DON'T COME CRYING TO ME. YOU SETTLE IT BETWEEN YOURSELVES, LIKE MEN.

I CAN'T HELP IT! IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE I HAD SUCH GOOD FOOD!
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD STARVE YOU TWO CUTE PUPPIES!
Here's some more!
REALLY? OH, WHAT A SWEET BOY HE IS!
WHOA! YES! ♡
THANKS, BIG SIS!



WHAT?
NOTHING, PUPPY, I WAS JUST THINKING...
...THIS MUST BE...
...WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO HAVE A LITTLE BROTHER.
MORNIN', CANNONBALL BOY!
DO YOU REMEMBER US?
WE CAME TO SAY HELLO!

SO NOISY... SO EARLY...
Jeez.
HA HA HA! WE'RE THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE!
WH-WH-WHO ARE YOU GUYS?!
Mama Bear
OF COURSE! WHAT'S A WELCOME WITHOUT INTRODUCTIONS?!
YOUR NAME'S ICHIMURA, RIGHT? CONGRATS ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP!
YOU MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING GREAT TO MAKE HIJIKATA-SAN FOLD LIKE THAT!
I SAW YOUR MATCH YESTERDAY!
BUT MAN, YOU'RE SMALL!
I'M THE CAPTAIN OF THE TENTH SQUAD AND THE BEST SPEARMAN IN THE SHINSENGUMI! HARADA SANOSUKE, 25 YEARS OLD!
THEY ALSO CALL ME "SANOSUKE: THE MAN WHO ONLY FAILED AT DYING."
HARADA SANOSUKE
MY BADGE OF HONOR! A SCAR FROM MY ATTEMPT AT SEPPUKU!
UH, SANO...
Haha

IT STILL LOOKS LIKE IT DID AT THE PARTY.
OH NO!
Ah ha ha ha!
.....
NAGAKURA SHINPACHI
AND I'M THIS GUY'S "OWNER," THE GREAT NAGAKURA SHINPACHI.
HUH...
I MIGHT NOT LOOK LIKE IT, BUT I'M THE CAPTAIN OF THE SECOND SQUAD NICE TO MEET YOU.
What did you say?!
YOU'RE THAT GUY WHO TRAMPLED ALL OVER ME YESTERDAY!
RELIVING THE DISGRACE
YESTERDAY? TRAMPLED?
Over You?
Ahem.
YUP. THAT'S RIGHT.
SO YOU TWO ARE ADVISORS TO THE VICE COMMANDER.
HUH? ME?
NOW I REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!

Let me go, Tatsu!
Urrgh!
MY APOLOGIES! HE'S JUST A BRAT WHO FORGETS HIS MANNERS!
!!!
AGH! CALM DOWN!!
Ah ha ha ha!
SORRY! I JUST DON'T USUALLY SEE GUYS WHO ARE SHORTER THAN SHINPACHI!
ボス
HMM...
BUT YOU KNOW...
...THAT'S ACTUALLY A REALLY GOOD THING.
SOME REGULAR, WELL-MANNERED KID WOULD'VE NEVER CHALLENGED SOUJI.
A NORMAL KID ISN'T TOUGH ENOUGH TO STAND IN THE RAIN ALL NIGHT, EITHER.
YEAH! YEAH! I WISH I COULD'VE HEARD YOUR FAMOUS LINE!
Weak!

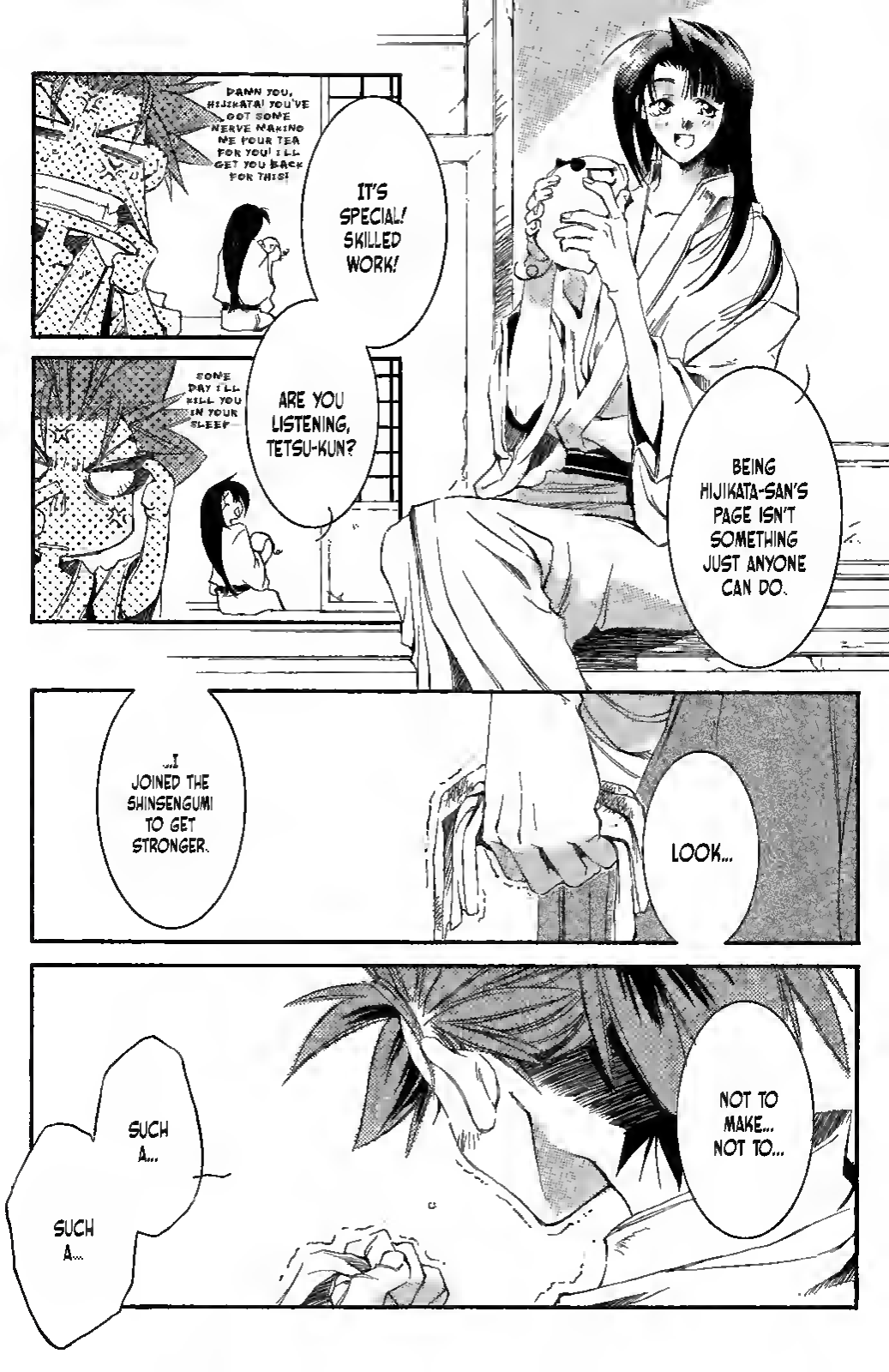
I RESPECT WHAT YOU DID, SO I'LL BE BLUNT--IT'S GONNA GET A LOT TOUGHER FROM HERE ON IN.
EXPECT IT! BE READY!
DON'T GIVE UP!
RIGHT!
Ahem.
PLEASE HEED THE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN YOU BY YOUR KIND SENIORS.
THAT IS ALL!
cough!
WOW. THAT WAS QUICK.
For you two anyway
.....

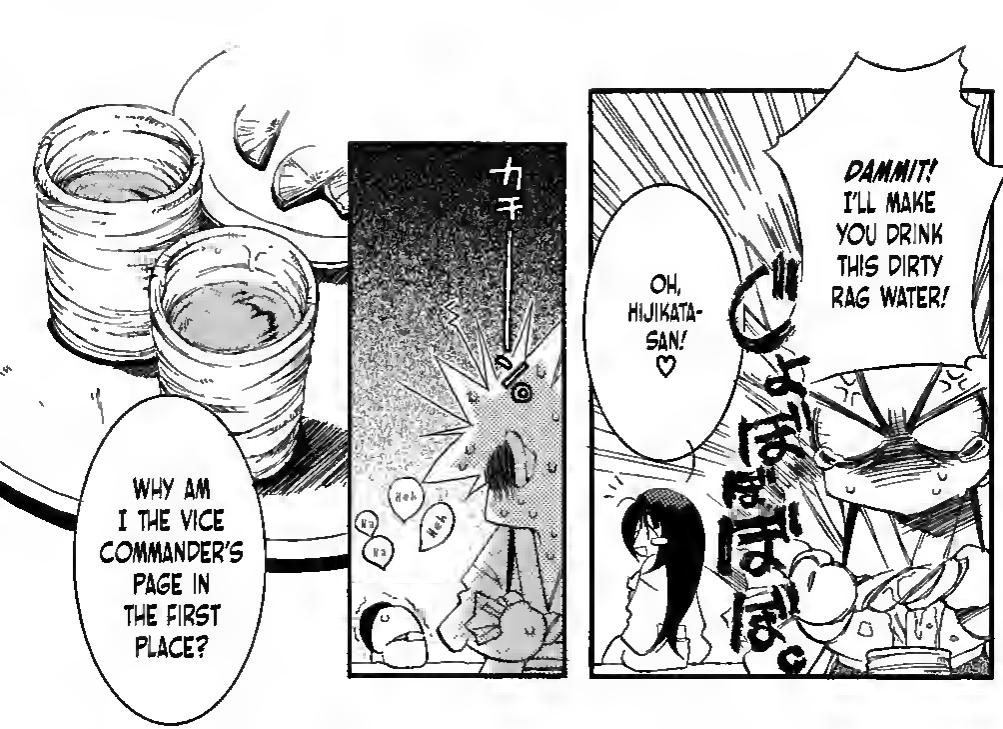
I couldn't possibly ask for a squad captain to give me a personal explanation!
Eeek!
NOPE, NOPE, NOPE. YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING ELSE.
ME, TOO?
GET UP, LITTLE BUDDY!
HUH?!
THAT WAS ONLY PART ONE! NEXT WE'RE GOING TO EXPLAIN WHAT YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WORK IS GOING TO BE.
Shall I be so?
DIDN'T WE TELL YOU?
THINGS ARE GONNA GET A LOT TOUGHER FROM NOW ON.
.....
.:
..

♪
♬
WHAT'S WITH YOU, SOUJI?
YOU SEEM TO BE IN AN AWFULLY GOOD MOOD.
YES, A VERY GOOD MOOD! ♡
♬
STARTING TOMORROW, IT'S GOING TO BE EVEN MORE FUN TO BE HERE! ♡
I DON'T INTEND TO TURN THIS PLACE INTO A NURSERY.
I'M THIRSTY.
ガラ

YOUR PAGE SHOULD BE BRINGING IT. ANY MOMENT NOW...
KCHK
KCLIK
OH, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA?
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
KCHK
ROLL
ROLL
O W !
KCHK

I SPILLED IT.
SQUEE
ALL RIGHT, TETSU-KUN?


DAMN YOU, HIJIKATA! YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE MAKING ME POUR TEA FOR YOU! I'LL GET YOU BACK FOR THIS!
IT'S SPECIAL! SKILLED WORK!
SOME DAY I'LL KILL YOU IN YOUR SLEEP
ARE YOU LISTENING, TETSU-KUN?
BEING HIJIKATA-SAN'S PAGE ISN'T SOMETHING JUST ANYONE CAN DO.
...I JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI TO GET STRONGER.
LOOK...
SUCH A...
SUCH A...
NOT TO MAKE... NOT TO...


DAMMIT! I'LL MAKE YOU DRINK THIS DIRTY RAG WATER!
OH, HIJIKATA-SAN! ♡
よぼぼぼぼ。
カキーン
WHY AM I THE VICE COMMANDER'S PAGE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

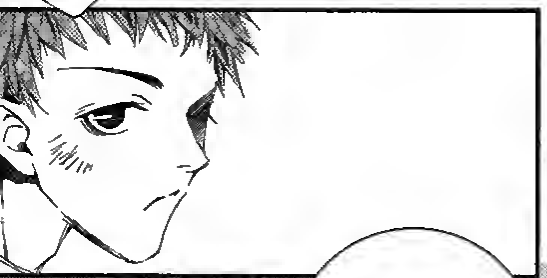
HE HATES ME...
DO YOU HATE HIM?
...MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE DOES.

I'M SURE YOU CAN DO IT.
カラン
IT'S ALL RIGHT.

Z Z Z Z Z Z
ZZZZZZ...
すっ
……
NOBODY'S WATCHING, RIGHT?
ww...
ビクッ
ALIGH!
WAUGH!
BE QUIET!
What's going on?

WHAT TIME DO YOU THINK IT IS?
TATSU?!

.....
OH.



YOU'VE GOT YOUR REASONS, AND I KNOW THEM, SO DON'T GET EMBARRASSED.

WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?
I FIGURED YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SLEEP UNLESS YOU WERE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS. SO I PREPARED IT FOR YOU.

...IF YOU JUST LET IT GO.
BUT YOU KNOW...
...NO ONE'S GOING TO PUNISH YOU...
パタン
shut
SNNRRK
ZZZZZ
ZZZZ

そんな。
カラッ
ギッ…!!
TA--
TATSU!
ユサユサ
フッ
gulp
ZZZ

キシ…
THAT'S...
...HIJIKATA-SAN'S ROOM.
I HAVE MY REPORT, SIR.

..I HAVE DETAILS CONCERNING THE INCIDENT IN KIYAMACHI YESTERDAY.
I MAY BE MERELY CONFIRMING THE SURVEILLANCE CONDUCTED BY NAGAKURA-SAN AND HARADA-SAN HOWEVER...
THEY ARE CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.
GOOD WORK.
THEY MUST BE PLOTTING SOMETHING AFTER ALL.
twitch
I SEE. SO THEY DID...
...DISAPPEAR ON OIKE STREET.

* Oike Street: A Chounshuu stronghold

ONE MOMENT, PLEASE.
CONTINUE YOUR INVESTIGATION AS DISCUSSED...
zzsh
HUH? WHY'D THEY STOP TALKING?
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK

DRIP
!!!
HUUUUH?!

WHO ON EARTH...
IS THIS GUY?

Act.4
How Do You Do-It

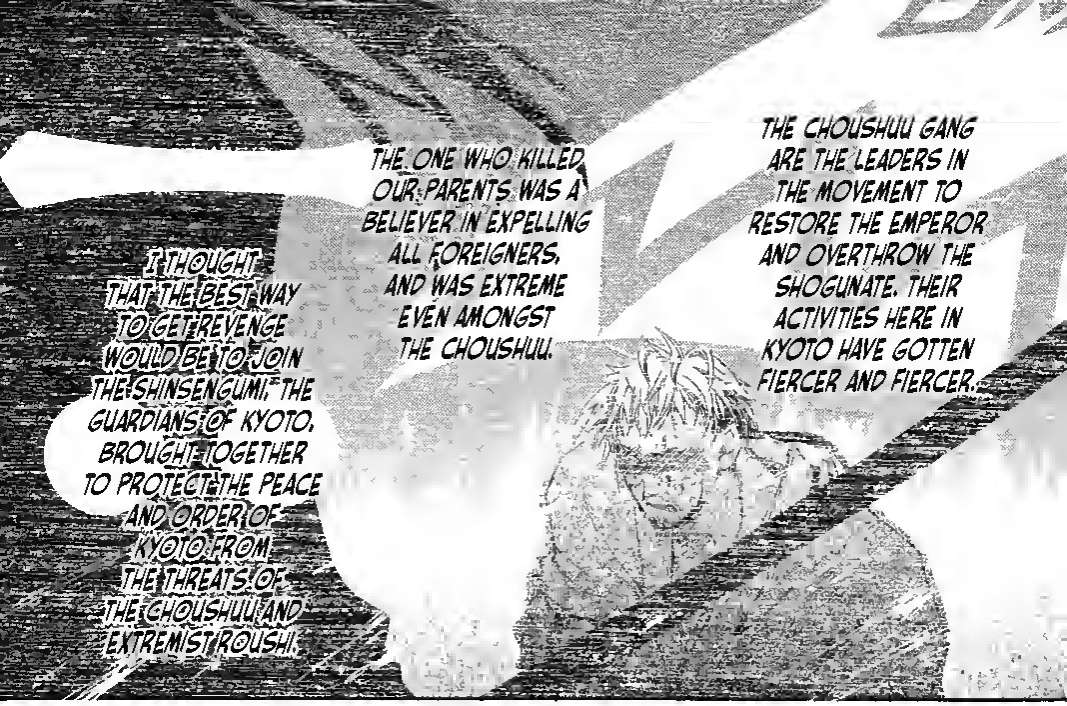
Gulp!
.....
WHO ON EARTH IS THIS GUY?
shut

WHO'RE YOU CALLIN' A PUPPY?!
BAM
WHAT WAS IT?
IT WAS JUST A STRAY PUPPY.
WHA? WHA?
LIKE I'M NOTHING!
DON'T TALK ABOUT ME
I RECOGNIZE THAT VOICE!
スパン!

Grr grl grr
LISTEN TO ME, TETSU.
IF THAT HAD GONE JUST A LITTLE BIT FURTHER, YOUR BIG BROTHER WOULD'VE BEEN IN HOT WATER, OKAY?
Grr gl gl grr
Sound of an ulcer thriving
BIG BROTHER IN HOT WATER MEANS NO FOOD OR SHELTER FOR LITTLE BROTHER, ALL RIGHT?
That hurt!
I WASN'T WRONG! I FOLLOWED HIM BECAUSE I THOUGHT HE WAS A THIEF OR SOMETHING!
OR MAYBE YOU WANT TO DIE? ON THE STREET? OR HERE, MAYBE? DO YOU WANT TO DIE TOGETHER? AH HA HA!
OWW! OWW!
Hey! Calm down!
WOULD YOU PLEASE GIVE IT A REST? WE DON'T HAVE ANY MEDICINE FOR NERVES HERE!
HE WAS TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT AND SOME SORT OF PLOT.
Don't repeat overheard TOP SECRET information!
HE'S A SPY.
It was why I was surprised!

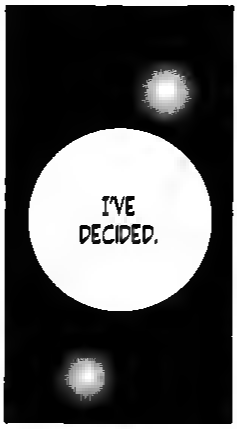
SHINSENGUMI OFFICER AND SPY, YAMAZAKI SUSUMU.
HE IS A COVERT OPERATIVE WHO SLIPS THROUGH THE CITY AND VILLAGES, SECRETLY GATHERING INFORMATION.
HE IS USUALLY DISGUISED AS SOMEONE ELSE, AND HARDLY EVER SHOWS HIS TRUE FACE, EVEN TO FELLOW SQUAD MEMBERS.
OOH...
BUT YOU SURE KNOW A LOT ABOUT HIM.
HOW?
Ha ha
Yeah
WELL, IF YOU WANT TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT A HOUSE, WORK IN THE KITCHEN.
See?
HEY!
CAN I BECOME A SPY, TOO?
WHAAA?!
BUT!

TETSU...
.....
AT THIS RATE I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIGHT WITH THOSE CHOUSHUU GUYS.
IS THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE?
TO GET REVENGE ON THE MEN FROM CHOUSHUU?
THEY KILLED BOTH OUR PARENTS.


I THOUGHT THAT THE BEST WAY TO GET REVENGE WOULD BE TO JOIN THE SHINSENGUMI,* THE GUARDIANS OF KYOTO, BROUGHT TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE PEACE AND ORDER OF KYOTO FROM THE THREATS OF THE CHOUSHUU AND EXTREMIST ROUSHI.
THE ONE WHO KILLED OUR PARENTS WAS A BELIEVER IN EXPELLING ALL FOREIGNERS, AND WAS EXTREME EVEN AMONGST THE CHOUSHUU.
THE CHOUSHUU GANG ARE THE LEADERS IN THE MOVEMENT TO RESTORE THE EMPEROR AND OVERTHROW THE SHOGUNATE. THEIR ACTIVITIES HERE IN KYOTO HAVE GOTTEN FIERCER AND FIERCER...

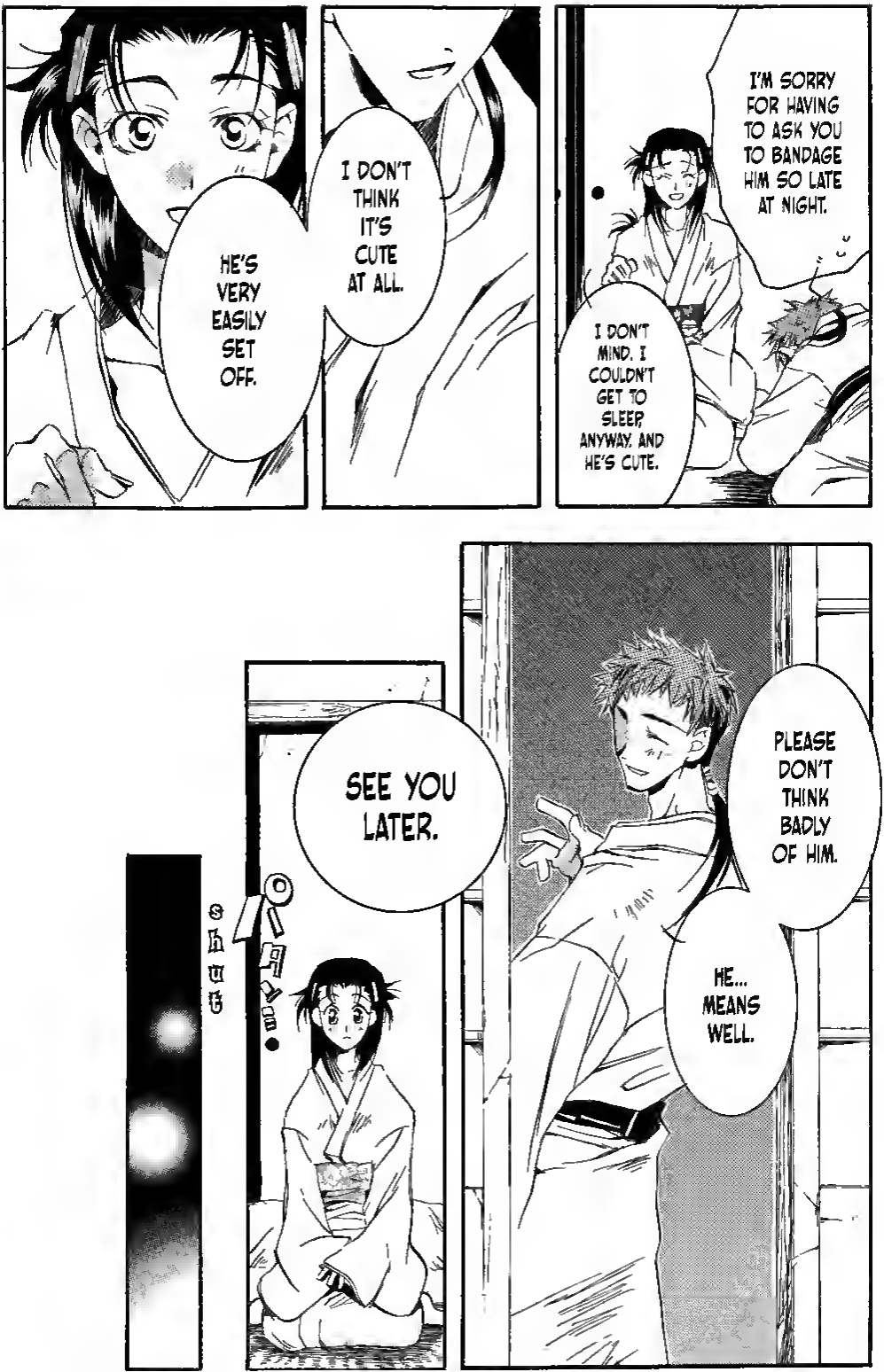
...BUT LITTLE BROTHER TOOK IT SERIOUSLY.
Sigh
BECOMING A SHINSENGUMI MEMBER WOULD KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE-- WE'D BE ABLE TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE CHOUSHUU AND GET STRONGER AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I SAID ONE DAY, IDLY...

I'M GOING TO QUIT BEING A PAGE AND BECOME A SPY.


I'VE DECIDED.

.....
BOYS WILL BE BOYS.

FIRST IMPRESSION
JUST THINK ABOUT IT! HE LOOKS ALMOST AS SMALL AS ME, BUT HE'S GOT THIS COOL JOB AS A SPY!
small as you?
THEY'RE WASTING MY TALENTS, MAKING ME WORK FOR THE VICE COMMANDER!
THAT'S NOT A FUNNY JOKE, TETSU!
RELAX, I'M SERIOUS!
.....!!
Stop talking like that.
SO IS THAT HOW IT IS...
He has almost no eyebrows at all!
I CAN DO SOME THINGS EVEN BETTER THAN THAT SPIKEY-HAIRED GUY!
YOU IDIOT!
.....
NOW THAT I'VE DECIDED, I'M GOING TO GO TO SLEEP, TO BE READY FOR TOMORROW! GOOD NIGHT!
Huh?
AUGH! YOU LEFT AGAIN WITHOUT SAYING THANK YOU!


I'M SORRY FOR HAVING TO ASK YOU TO BANDAGE HIM SO LATE AT NIGHT.
I DON'T MIND. I COULDN'T GET TO SLEEP ANYWAY. AND HE'S CUTE.
I DON'T THINK IT'S CUTE AT ALL.
HE'S VERY EASILY SET OFF.
PLEASE DON'T THINK BADLY OF HIM.
HE... MEANS WELL.
SEE YOU LATER.
ハーイ♥
shug

チチ…
ちちち…
ズン
ズン
ズン
ズン
ズン
ズン
ズ…ン。

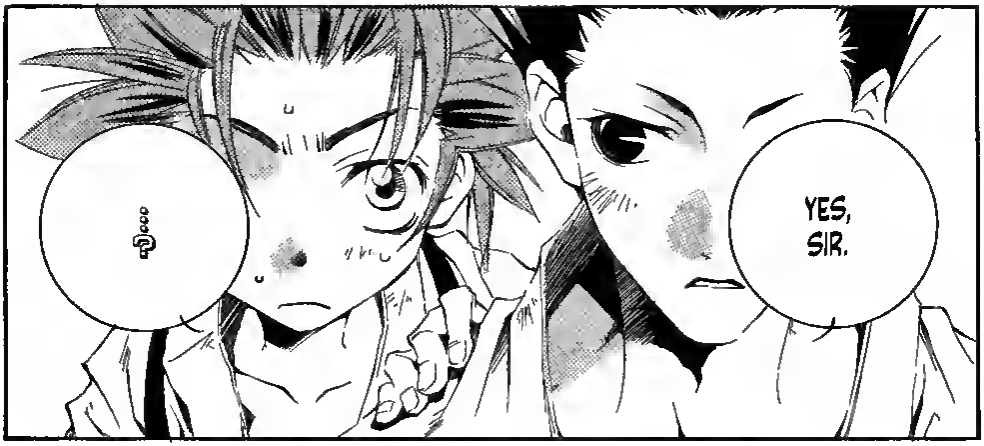
ズーン
……
SNAP
ズカ
ズカ
どすっ
……
チラ…
HMM? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

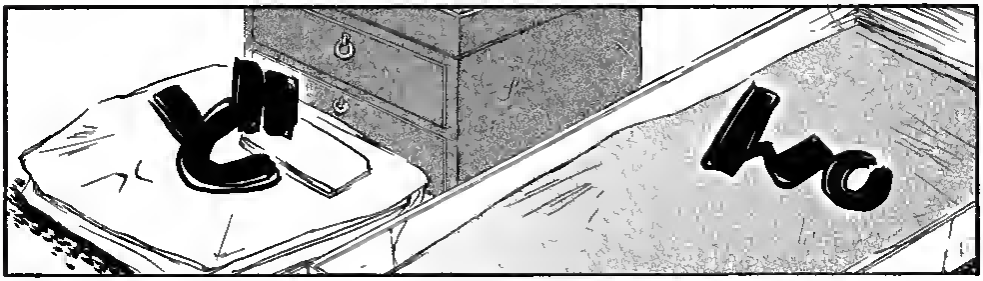
Heh heh heh.
I'M RUNNING A LITTLE "EXPERIMENT."
TO SEE WHICH OF US IS BETTER AT THIS KIND OF WORK.
Oh well.
WELL. IF YOU MUST KNOW THAT BADLY, I'LL TELL YOU.
THAT KID'S HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH YAMAZAKI.
BUT CAN YOU REALLY CALL THAT A CONVERSATION?
ARE YOU LISTENING? HEY!
I WANT TO SHOW THAT DEMON VICE COMMANDER THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR ABILITIES.
creak creak
SHUT
SHUT
Gasp!
HERE HE COMES!

ひた
ひた
IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP, DARLING! ♡
STOP IT, SOUJI!
THE TIME FOR THE DECISIVE BATTLE HAS COME!
I'M GIVING YOU AN ORDER.
This is how he imagines it.
gulp
WHAT TIME IS IT NOW?
IT'S ALREADY 10 AM! DID YOU FOOL AROUND ALL NIGHT AGAIN?
HUH? I WAS WORKING!
HE WAS STILL SLEEPING?!
I FEEL SORRY FOR YAMAZAKI-KUN.
I BET HE HAS NOTHING TO DO. OR HE'S JUST SITTING AROUND READING.

ffft
NOW THEN...
OKAY.
I'LL HAVE AYUMU-SAN PREPARE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO EAT.
HURRY UP AND GIVE HIM HIS ORDERS.
ALMOST TIME!
スパーン!!
YAMAZAKI-KUN.
YES!
YES, SIR.

GOOD GRIEF.
I WANT YOU TO CHECK OUT A DRY GOODS STORE CALLED KYOUYA IN SHIJOU.
ALSO, IF YOU HAVE TIME, GO AROUND TO A USED GOODS STORE CALLED MASUYA, TOO. THERE IS NO RUSH ON IT, BUT...
Wow!
THERE'S BEEN A NUMBER OF ROUSHI THERE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS NOW.
THAT SHOULD BE PLENTY FOR TODAY.
NO.
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?


YES, SIR.



HE SURE HAS A LOT OF DIFFERENT CLOTHES!
What does he use them for?
WH-WHAT DO I DO?

Wow...
HAS COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ALL "EXPERIMENTS" AND TESTS OF SKILL.
スッ…
WAH...!
ハッ
ざり

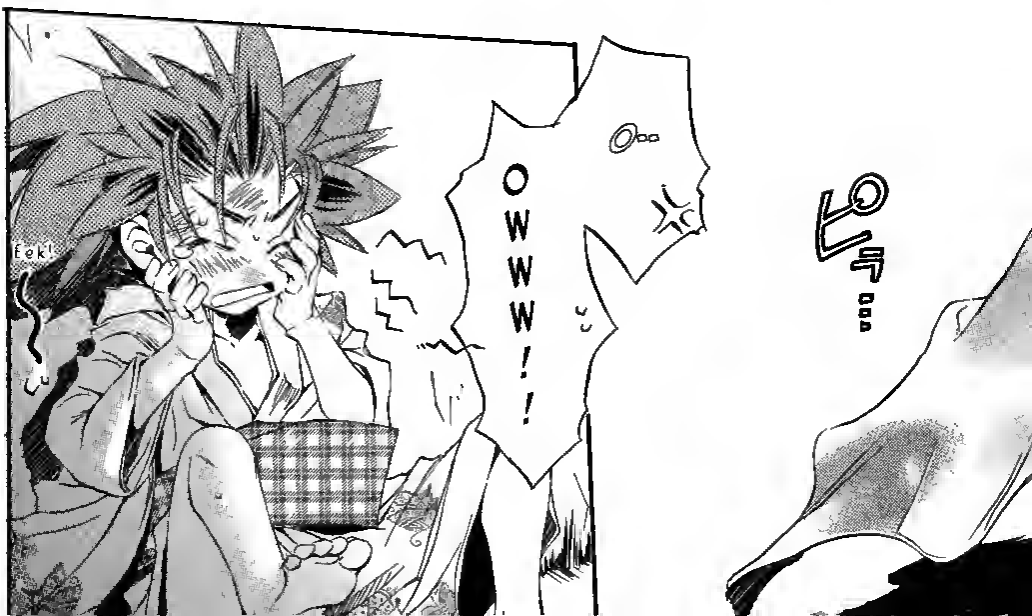
And then
Ha ha ha...
HEY!
DOH
NNGH ...
カラン

AAAAAAH!!
FINALLY REMEMBERED HIS EXPERIMENT.
INCREDIBLE!
HE'S A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON!
CENSORED
beep
I WON'T LOSE!
USED GOODS STORE MASUYA
Thank you for your business.
すっ
OH.

MASUYA-HAN! IT'S BEEN TOO LONG!
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T SEN-HAN! WHAT A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU! ♡
HOW CAN I HELP YOU TODAY?
I CAME TO TAKE A LOOK AT ANY NEW ARRIVALS.
Heh
BUT THAT'S JUST AN EXCUSE.
THE TRUTH IS...I HAD A SUDDEN URGE TO SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN.
WELL... WELL...
ANYWAY, PLEASE COME INSIDE

?
?
……?!
ドス?!

ビクッ
……


Eek!
OWWW!!
ピク…

I...
WHY DID YOU STOP ME?
I WAS JUST COMING TO HELP YOU!

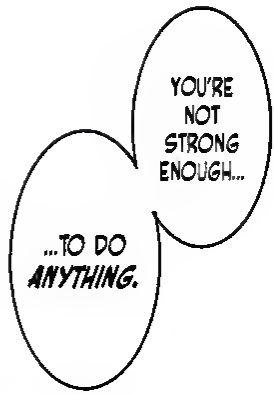
KNOCK IT OFF, KID. RIGHT NOW.
I LET YOU GO ON BACK THERE BECAUSE YOU LOOK ABOUT TWELVE YEARS OLD...
...BUT I WON'T LET YOU MAKE A FOOL OF ME.
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR JOB IS?

SERIOUSLY.
WHY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE A PAGE?
.....?
HURRY UP AND CHANGE AND THEN GET LOST.
.....
REMEMBER THIS:

POOR THING. SHE'S STILL JUST A LITTLE KID.

WHAT, ARE YOU KIDDING? WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING AGAINST RONIN.
ISN'T ANYONE GOING TO HELP HER?

THIS KIND OF CRAP IS ALWAYS HAPPENING AT MASUYA.


YOU'RE NOT STRONG ENOUGH...
...TO DO ANYTHING.

.....
THAT AIN'T GONNA BE ENOUGH FOR US TO LET YOU GO.
YOU STILL GOT A LOT OF MONEY LEFT, DON'T YOU?

SHE IS AN IMPORTANT CUSTOMER. SO PLEASE...
EX- EXCUSE ME.
LET HIM GO, LET HIM GO.
...FORGIVE HER--
HUH?!
...DO ANYTHING, ANYWAY.
HE CAN'T...

……
ガッ
ガッ
ヒュ
HEY, KID.
YA WANT SOME-THIN'?
Ha ha ha...

Act.5
Act Naturally

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DO IT, SOUJI!
I'D NEVER WALK AROUND, EVEN OFF DUTY, WITHOUT MY SWORDS.
HUH?
"HUH?" YOU TOTALLY LOOK LIKE A GIRL WITHOUT SWORDS!
WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT NOT WEARING THEM? THEY GET IN THE WAY WHEN I PLAY TAG.
WHA ?!
LOOK, CAN'T YOU BE A LITTLE MORE MANLY?
HEY, MOMMY! THERE'S A FIGHT GOIN' ON OVER THERE! LET'S GO CHECK IT OUT!
C'MON!

.....
THE BAD SAMURAI WERE BULLYING A GIRL, AND THE BOY STOPPED THEM! IT WAS SO COOL!
STOP TALKING NONSENSE WE'RE GOING HOME!
It's dangerous!
IT'S JUST SOME DIRTY RONIN BUTCHERING EACH OTHER.
UNH-UH! IT'S A SMALL POINTY-HAIRED BOY AND SOME REALLY SCARY LOOKING SAMURAI!
HEY, SOUJI.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, TETSUNOSUKE-KUN DOESN'T HAVE HIS OWN SWORDS.
WELL, IT DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION, BUT...
Hmm
IF YOU WERE UNARMED, HOW WOULD *YOU* FIGHT SOMEONE WHO'S CARRYING SWORDS?

...I'D PROBABLY ATTACK WITH MY FEET FIRST.

GRAARGH!!
どしゃっ
すたっ
YOU STINKIN' BRAT!
YAAAAH!!
ゴ
ドン
ッ!!

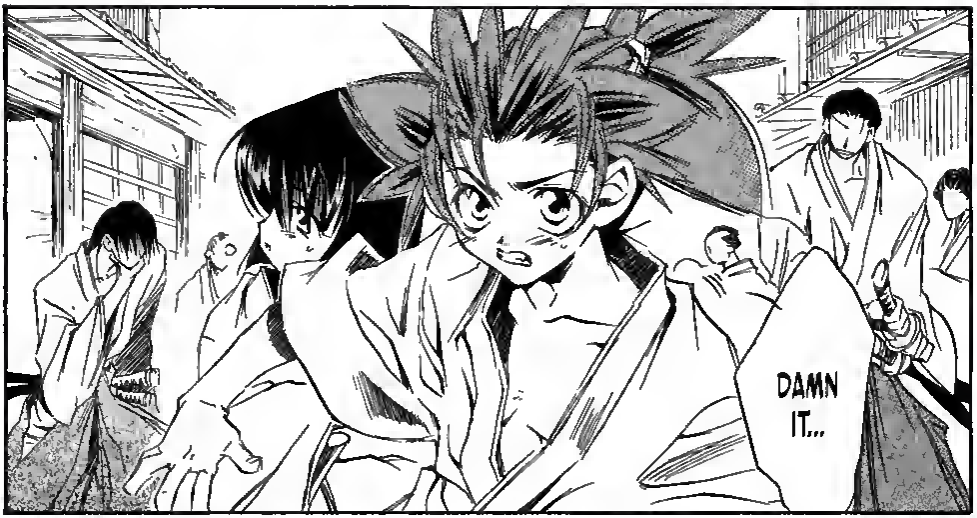
NOT GOOD.
IF THIS GOES ON ANY LONGER, THE VIOLENCE WILL SPREAD TO MASUYA.
.....
OOOOW!!
!!
OH, CRAP!

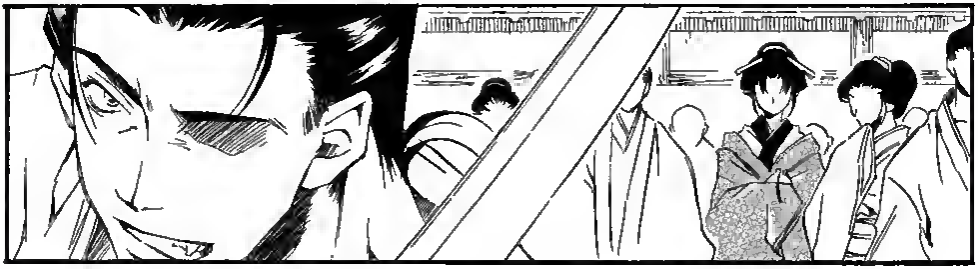
どど…
DON'T MOVE A MUSCLE, GOT IT?
THERE, THERE. BE GOOD LITTLE CHILDREN.
KAARGH!!!
!!

WHOOPS!
ひょいっ
FRONT, HUH?
WH-WHAT THE?!
DAMN IT. YOU LITTLE BRAT...

OW--
OWW !!!

ZWSH
HURRY, THIS WAY!
THANKS FOR THE HELP! LET'S GO!
YOU'RE JUST ONE LITTLE BRAT...
I DIDN'T THINK I'D HAVE TO DRAW MY SWORD...
...BUT I GUESS I DON'T GOTTA HOLD BACK AFTER ALL.

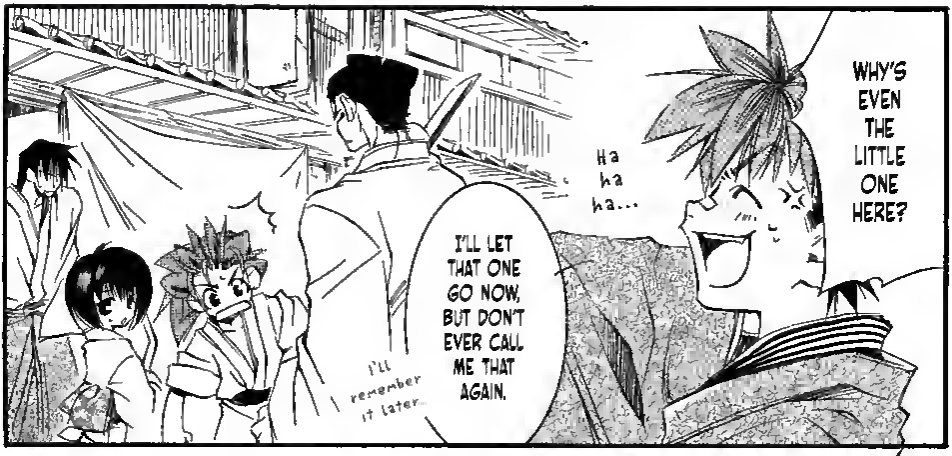

DAMN IT...



PLEASE, WAIT.
.....

IF YOU WAVE THOSE AROUND...
...YOU'LL BLOW YOUR COVER.
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
?!

O...
OK!--
HEY!!
ONLY FAMOUS PEOPLE GET THEIR NAMES SHOUTED IN PUBLIC. NOT US!
OH MY. THAT'S DANGEROUS.
EVEN IF YOU'RE JUST PLAYING AROUND, I CAN'T SAY I APPROVE OF YOU DRAWING YOUR SWORD.


WHY'S EVEN THE LITTLE ONE HERE?
Ha ha ha...
I'LL LET THAT ONE GO NOW, BUT DON'T EVER CALL ME THAT AGAIN.
I'll remember it later.

HEY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU GUYS WANT, BUT...

HEY, HEY!

...IF YOU LAY A HAND ON ME, I'LL HURT THIS KID.
Huh?

AUGH!!
GRIN
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG OPPONENT, BUDDY.
ALL RIGHT!
HEY, YOU TWO! LEAVE THE REST TO US!
TH-THE BIG ONE'S HERE, TOO?
COME ON, TETSU-KUN! THIS WAY! HURRY!

DRAW YOUR SWORD!
I'M GONNA KILL YA!
ガラ…
HEY, YOU BASTARD.
SORRY, BUT...
...SWORDS AIN'T EXACTLY MY THING.
SO...
ヨラ

YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO LET ME FIGHT WITH THIS!!
D...

BACK OFF, BABY!
Spit
TSUU

AH...
UH...
!!!
krk

I COULD'VE RUN YOU THROUGH RIGHT THERE!
FROM NOW ON, BOW AT THE DOOR WHEN YOU GO INTO A SHOP!
D-DAMN IT...
kaff
kaff
HE'S STRONG.
IF I FIGHT HIM...
gulp
HEY, HEY, SANO!
YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T DO THAT!
GO A LITTLE EASIER ON--

YAWHAAA?!
TH--
THAT SCARED ME!
Whoa!
ギリ!
ズズズ
YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS!
YOU'RE GETTING PUSHED BACK!
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON?
じっ

...DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN BEAT ME WITH THAT KIND OF PRESSURE?
NOW, LISTEN, LITTLE GUY...
Sigh
?!
OH, DAMN IT...

斬
SLICE

ドサッ
TOO BAD.
I MAY NOT LOOK LIKE IT, BUT I'M PRETTY GOOD.
ハッ
AWRIGHT! ONLY ONE MORE LEFT!
COME ON! I'LL KILL YA!
キーン
HUH?

COME ON, TETSU-KUN. LEAVE THE REST TO US.
B-BUT...
I...

OKITA-SAN!!

ガッ！

しゅる…
ISN'T THAT COWARDLY...
...TO ATTACK SOMEONE FROM BEHIND?
Heh
IT'S ALL RIGHT. HURRY UP AND LEAVE.
OKITA-SAN...!

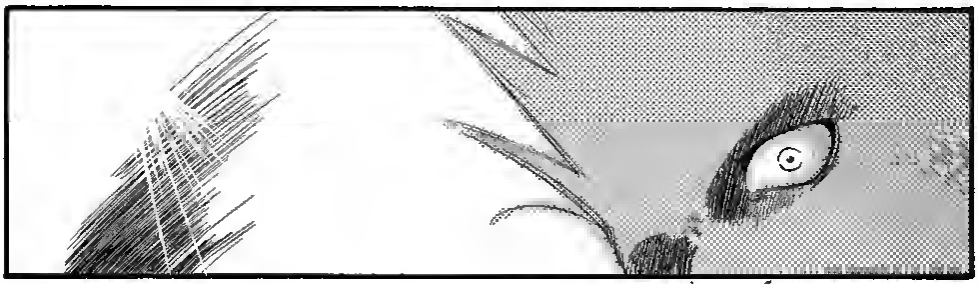
GO ON!
AH...
.....
YOU'RE ONE OF THE SHINSEN-GUMI!
...BASTARD...
Y-YOU...

I THINK WE'RE OKAY NOW.
YOU MUST'VE BEEN SCARED! ARE YOU HURT ANYWHERE?

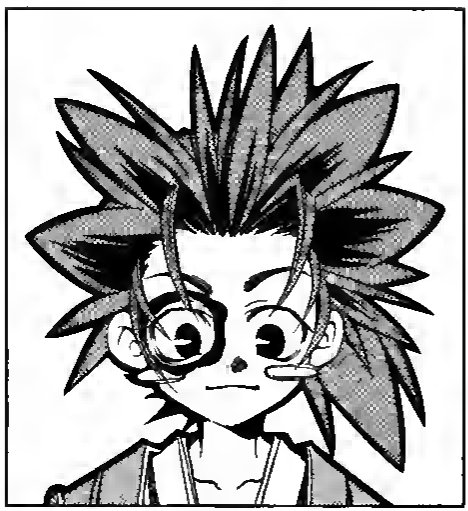
BE CAREFUL ON YOUR WAY HOME.
THAT'S GOOD!
フルフル
……

SEE YA!
HEH HEH!
.....

WHAT ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT FOR? AREN'T YOU WORKING?
HUH?! HEY!
.....
WELL, WHATEVER. AT LEAST I SAVED THE GIRL.



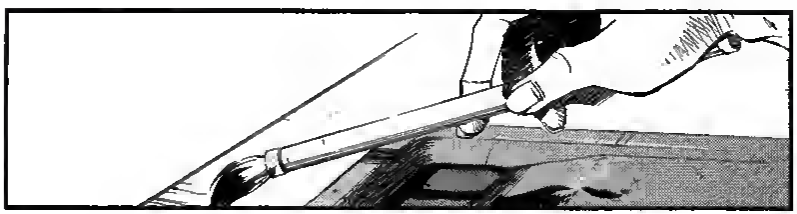
Continued in Peace Maker 2



In the Next

PEACE MAKER
ピースメーカー

New comrades revealed
But beware the dark swordsman
And his pupil, too.



Coming soon!